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THE BELIEF IN GOD AND IMMORTALITY

A Psychological, Anthropological and Statistical Study

BY

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TO
MY WIFE

INTRODUCTION

God, the soul, and immortality constitute, according to general opinion, the great framework of religion. In an earlier book I have considered the origin, the nature, the function, and the future of the belief in what I have called "personal" gods. The present volume is a similar study of the belief in personal immortality. Chapters one to four treat of the origin, the nature, and the function of this belief. They show in particular that two quite different conceptions of personal immortality have been successively elaborated; and that the modern conception is not a growth from the primary belief, but an independent creation, differing radically from it in point of origin, in nature, and in function. Whereas the primary belief was forced upon men irrespective of their wishes as an unavoidable interpretation of certain patent facts (chiefly the apparition of deceased persons in dreams and in visions), the modern belief was born of a desire for the realization of ideals. The first came to point to an exclusively wretched existence, and prompted men merely to guard against the possible danger to them arising from ghosts; the second contemplated from the first endless continuation in a state of completed or increased perfection, and incited the living to ceaseless efforts in order to make themselves fit for that blessed consummation.

The effort that has been made to justify at the bar of reason the modern belief in immortality by providing metaphysical proofs of it, is considered in chapter five. From a survey of these "proofs" it is evident that the longer we strive to demonstrate its truth, the more obvious becomes our failure, and the more general the conviction that "if immortality cannot be disproved, neither can it be proved." We shall see that even firm believers in immortality have had to come to this opinion.

Deductive reasoning having failed, an attempt was then made to demonstrate personal immortality by methods acceptable to science. This effort — mainly the work of the Society for Psychical Research — is described and appraised in the last chapter of Part I.

It would of course be most helpful, both to scientific students of religion and to ministers of it, did there exist definite information regarding the present diffusion of cardinal religious beliefs among the civilized nations. Heretofore most divergent opinions have prevailed; and it has been possible neither to prove nor to refute them, since the statistics of belief so far attempted have no actual statistical value whatever. In Part II, the present status in the United States of the beliefs in God and immortality is shown as it appears from extensive statistical inquiries in which the usual fatal defects of statistical researches in the field of religious beliefs have been avoided. These inquiries have yielded results of considerable significance; and we are now for the first time in a position to make certain definite statements, valid for *entire groups* of influential persons,

namely, college students, physical scientists, biologists, historians, sociologists and economists, and psychologists. We have been able not only to compare these groups with each other but also, among the students, the lower classes with the higher; and, among the other groups, the more eminent persons with the less eminent. It appears, with incontrovertible evidence, that in each group the more distinguished fraction includes by far the smaller number of believers. This, taken in connection with a study of the factors of belief, leads to important conclusions regarding the causes of disbelief. I hope that despite the widespread and, I must admit, on the whole justifiable distrust of statistics of belief, no reader will pass a summary judgment upon mine until he has examined them with some care.

The numerous and extraordinarily varied comments made by those who answered the author's *questionnaire*, as well as by those who refused to answer it, provide data of especial value for the psychology of belief and also for an understanding of the present situation of the Christian religion. Not only in Part II, but throughout the book, I have cited typical, concrete instances in profusion. By thus following a practice common in descriptive sciences, I have, I trust, kept close to reality and avoided the theoretical and empty character from which so many works on religion suffer.

In a third and last part are presented certain facts and considerations bearing upon the present utility of the beliefs in a personal God and in immortality, from which it appears that, so far at least as the United States and other equally civilized

countries are concerned, the enormous practical importance customarily ascribed to these beliefs no longer corresponds to reality. Since the study of origins and motives shows that the attributes which make gods and life after death precious to mankind are derived from social experience, it is evident that the loss of these beliefs would involve the loss not of anything essential, but only of a particular method (that of the present religions) of maintaining and increasing among men certain values created and discovered in social intercourse. What the real losses would be, and whether they might be compensated or even turned to gain, constitute the chief topics of this concluding section.

It is often urged that studies of origins and motives do not yield information bearing upon the probable truth of beliefs. This opinion should be corrected. When the methods of philosophy are impotent to determine "truth," our only recourse is to a verification by experience, as in the case of scientific hypotheses, and to a study of origins and motives. There are circumstances where acquaintance with the origin of a belief, together with a knowledge of its inherent difficulties, bring down to a vanishing point the probability of its truth.

A word of explanation is probably necessary in order to prevent misunderstanding of the scope of this study. My investigation of immortality bears upon "personal immortality" only. I take this term in its ordinary acceptation, i. e., as meaning a continuation after death (with or without body)

of the consciousness of personal identity. Similarly, I am concerned, as in my earlier book, only with that conception of the divine which I have qualified by the term "personal." My purpose does not oblige me to define the meaning I attach to that difficult word when applied to gods, further than to say that it designates beings with whom can be maintained the relations implied in all the historical religions in which a God or gods are worshiped, i. e., direct intellectual and affective relations. A personal God as here understood is therefore not necessarily an anthropomorphic, but certainly an *anthropopathic* being.

Few words are used in as wide and ill-defined a meaning as "god," for few are willing to forego the prestigeous advantage belonging to its use; and so it has come to pass that a term owing its primary and dominant meaning to its connection with historical religions has come to be used in a second meaning precluding attributes essential to the gods of the historical religions. The conception of Ultimate Reality as it is found in the philosophy of Absolute Idealism, and by it called God, is no more adequate to the expectations of any existing form of worship than the alchemist's conception of matter is adequate to the work of modern science.[1] The

[1] That the gods of metaphysics are not the gods of religion, is clearly acknowledged by Arthur Balfour in his last book (*Theism and Humanism,* Gifford Lectures for 1914, page 35, 36). I quote: "It is the God according to religion, and not the God according to metaphysics, whose being I wish to prove. . . . When I speak of God, I mean something other than an Identity wherein all differences vanish, or a Unity which includes but does not transcend the differences which it somehow holds in

confusion of these two meanings should not be tolerated, not even though it should prove impracticable to limit the use of " god " to its original significance. That this confusion is in fact tolerated, and even, it seems, encouraged, is not due only to the lack of a sufficiently clear realization of the essential difference existing between the gods of the historical religions and the " gods " of metaphysics, but in an equal measure perhaps to an unwillingness to admit an unwelcome truth. There are devoted Christians who apparently prefer living in intellectual dishonesty to recognizing that the God whom they worship has no existence in their philosophy.

It hardly need be said here that the abandonment of the belief in a personal God and in personal immortality, though it involved the disappearance of the existing religions, need not bring to an end religious life. Religion is not to be identified with its present forms. The faith of the ancient Hebrews, which looked only to the continuation of the nation, refutes sufficiently the opinion according to which the immortal individual soul is a tenet necessary to all religions. While original Buddhism, which denies the existence of a personal God, and Comte's *Religion of Humanity*, which includes among its articles of faith neither personal God nor soul,

solution. I mean a God whom men can love, a God to whom men can pray, who takes sides, who has purposes and preferences, whose attributes, however conceived, leave unimpaired the possibility of a personal relation between Himself and those whom He has created."

For a demonstration of the correctness of this distinction, see chapter XI, especially pages 245 to 254, of my earlier book, *A Psychological Study of Religion; Its Origin, Function, and Future.*

demonstrate the possible independence of religion from the belief in a personal God. The sources of the religious life, its fundamental realities, lie deeper than the conceptual forms in which they find expression.

To regard this book as merely destructive in its results, because no sufficient ground has been found for belief in immortality, and because the statistics presented demonstrate an alienation from beliefs present in all the historical religions (Comtism and original Buddhism excepted) and provide reasons for anticipating a continuous decrease of these beliefs, would be to overlook its essential results, namely, the analysis both of the fundamental motives and of the secondary causes which have led to the formation of the primary belief in immortality, to its subsequent displacement by the modern belief, and which at the present time prompt many of those most sensitive to moral values to seek elsewhere than in the continuation of the identity of the Ego the satisfaction of spiritual needs. To uncover the deeper sources from which spring the varied forms of our religious life, even when this involves laying bare the uncertainty or inadequacy of old and widely accepted convictions, cannot with justice be characterized as a destructive performance. Rather should it be regarded, from a practical point of view, as tending to accomplish a threefold good: the deliverance of man from a devitalizing fear of imaginary disastrous consequences that are to attend the loss of these beliefs; his inspiration with renewed confidence in the reliability of the forces by which

he feels himself urged onward, however ignorant of their nature he may otherwise be; and his enrichment with information useful for the wise guidance of his efforts at reconstruction when reconstruction shall have appeared imperative.

Parts II and III may be read independently of Part I, but the full weight of the investigation will not be felt by those who have omitted the first part.

I take pleasure in acknowledging here the valuable assistance received from Miss Edith Orlady in the preparation of this book.

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PART I

THE TWO CONCEPTIONS OF IMMORTALITY: THEIR ORIGINS, THEIR DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTICS AND THE ATTEMPTED DEMONSTRATION OF THE TRUTH OF THE MODERN CONCEPTION

CHAPTER I

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRIMARY BELIEF IN CONTINUATION AFTER DEATH [1]

"It might be hard to point to a single tribe of men, however savage, of whom one could say with certainty that the faith is totally wanting among them": thus writes Frazer [2] of the belief in survival after death; and most other competent anthropologists affirm with less caution the presence of that belief in every tribe, however primitive.[3]

This universal belief of the non-civilized in continuation after death is commonly regarded as essentially similar to the modern belief in immortality; yet we shall find it to be so radically different from the former, that it would be nearer the truth to maintain that, save for the idea of continuation, the

1 In this chapter I shall use "continuation" and "survival" interchangeably with "immortality." When one deals with the beliefs of the savage and of the average civilized man, immortality is the less exact of these terms.

2 J. G. Frazer: *The Belief in Immortality:* London; Macmillan; 1913. Pages 25, 33. This volume is a valuable compilation of beliefs concerning immortality among the aborigines of Australia, the Torres Straits Islands, New Guinea, and Melanesia.

3 Following the present custom, I shall use the term "primitive" to designate, as the case may be, the lowest populations now extant or the hypothetical original man.

two beliefs have nothing in common. Nothing else belonging to the old conception remains in the new, and none of the services rendered by the new were known to the believers in the old. We shall see, further, that the savage is convinced of immortality by facts rejected *in toto* by the civilized Christian, and that the latter desires immortality for reasons unknown to the savage. The history of the idea of continuation after death falls, therefore, into two great historical periods between which there is no continuation of a vital character. The first we shall call the period of the primary, or ghost-belief.

WHEN DID THE BELIEF IN PRIMARY CONTINUATION APPEAR?

The demonstration of the existence in every living tribe of the primary belief would not, however, be equivalent to a proof of its coëxistence with human life. Was there not a social stage earlier than the one represented by the present "primitive" man, in which the idea of the surviving soul had not yet appeared? One might argue with great plausibility that the grim fact of death must have been at first conclusive of the finality of earthly existence. Men, animals, and plants drop and decay; the human body not only becomes inert but falls to pieces and dissolves. That ever recurring direct, *sensory demonstration* of finality must, it seems, have overcome any adverse promptings coming from the instinct of self-preservation and from any existing sense of permanency.

One might turn to archeology for a solution of this problem. From that science, if from any, must

come the knowledge we seek. I need hardly say that, for the present, archeology is far from having fully discovered the material conditions of life and still less the social customs and beliefs of the early populations, the existence of which it has revealed.

Not a trace of reliable information has been found as to the existence of man during the Tertiary age. The skeletal remains (*pithecanthropus erectus*) discovered by Dr. Dubois at Trinil, on the island of Java in a pliocene formation, are not sufficient to permit an assured classification. They may be part of a man, or of an anthropoid ape now extinct. Of the presence of man during the earlier Quaternary age, we possess indications quite insufficient to permit conclusions concerning possible burial customs.

The middle and later Quaternary (this includes the "reindeer period") are the earliest periods about which archeology has provided reliable information. Three prehistoric races (the race of Neanderthal or of Spy, that of Cro-Magnon or of Langerie, and the Negroid race) and some of their funerary customs have been discovered. A large part of this information comes from the caves of Grimaldi,[4] situated near the Principality of Monaco. A few words concerning the finds made in one of these caves, the *Grotte des Enfants,* will serve our purpose. In this cave stood ten meters of deposit arranged in nine superposed dwelling levels. The inferior layers contained remains of reindeer. The deposits extend, therefore, throughout the second half of the Quaternary age. Several skeletons were found at different levels. One of the sepultures, at a depth of

[4] See Tome I, pages 289–299, of J. Déchelette's *Manuel d'Archéologie Préhistorique Celtique et Gallo-Romaine:* Paris; Picard et Fils; 1908–1914. The two tomes are published in four volumes and two appendices.

7m. 50, known as sepulture number four, contained skeletons of an old woman and of an adolescent. The young man carried on the forehead a wreath of four rows of perforated shells. The left arm of the woman was decorated with two bracelets made of the same shells. A few flint blades seemed to have been placed on the bodies or by their sides at the time of burial.[5]

In another Grimaldi cave was found the famous *Homme de Menton.* About the skull were more than 2000 perforated shells, which probably formed a head decoration, and twenty-two canines of deer, also perforated. These objects and certain bones of the skeleton were colored.

The age of these Quaternary races is immaterial to us; what we wish to know is the degree of development attained by them, how far removed they were from what may be considered the really primitive man. The only answer we can make to that question is that they belong to the "rough stone" age; that is, to a time when metals and pottery[6] were unknown. The only implements used were of stone, chiefly flint; of bones; and of wood. These populations were, therefore, presumably at a stage of culture somewhat inferior to that of the most primitive contemporary savages.

We may thus take it for established that the tribes of the stone age buried their dead, or some of them, in protected places; and that together with the body they interred ornaments and a few useful implements, chiefly flint blades. The skull and bones of the face were often colored with ocres. Stones were sometimes placed under the head and about the body,

[5] Déchelette, *Loc. cit.* Vol. I, page 294.

[6] Some very simple pieces of pottery, apparently belonging to the Quaternary age, have been found in Belgium.

as for protection. Our archeological knowledge goes so far and no further.

Must these funerary customs be taken to imply a belief in survival after death? No, not necessarily. It is conceivable that even in the absence of a belief in an after-life, bodies should have been buried in this fashion. There are feelings, natural even to the savage, which might have led to these practices. The appreciation of faithfulness, dignity, and power are surely traits belonging in some measure to men of the lowest societies known to us. Who would deny to any being, really belonging to the human species, an aversion for casting to the dogs the body of a person liked and respected? A propensity, quite independent of a belief in souls, to take some care of at least some corpses, at some time or other, must, it seems, be conceded. And, how better can respect and affection be shown than by burying the person with the things which in this life he needed most and valued above all others, the things which he had used and worn and which had become, in a sense, a part of his personality?

No more can the presence of certain pictures on the walls of Quaternary caves, and a curious custom which I shall describe presently, be regarded as demonstrating the existence of the survival-idea among these Troglodytes. From the position of these pictures in high places and in dark recesses, as well as for other reasons, Salomon Reinach concluded that they were not intended as decorations. (He assimilated them to the pictures of present day savages by which they magically insure the multiplication or the capture of the animals pictured.) The principle

tacitly recognized in this widely distributed kind of magic is that the picture or, in other instances, the name or the gesture-imitation of a thing gives control over that thing. The magical function of these wall pictures is rendered the more probable by the fact that they include only desirable animals; no carnivora are found among them.[7]

The curious practice to which I have referred consisted in cutting out of the skull of living or of dead persons pieces to be worn in the manner of amulets or other magical objects. A single explorer, Prunière, has gathered in Lozère no less than one hundred and twenty-six perforated skulls and forty-one pieces taken from them. It seems that trepanation on the dead was performed in preference upon skulls that had already been trepanned in life, perhaps, as Broca suggested, because these persons were invested with a holy character. These pieces of bone, perforated at each end, were no doubt sacred objects, conferring upon the wearer powers and immunities.[8]

Both this custom and the animal paintings are consistent with the absence of the idea of survival. They may be explained as an expression of belief in the existence of an impersonal force, a mana, residing in the person or the animal, a part of which is supposed to be secured or controlled by the possession of a bit of the skull of the deceased, or by a representation of the animal.

[7] *L'Anthropologie;* 1903; pages 257–266; and more fully in *Cultes, Mythes et Religions:* Leroux; Paris; 1905–1906; Vol. I, pages 125–136.

See in my book, *A Psychological Study of Religion,* the discussion of magic and religion.

[8] Déchelette, *Loc. cit.,* pages 474–482.

But if the presence of burial is not necessarily a proof of the presence of the continuation-idea, no more is the absence of burial a proof of the absence of that conception. We know, as a matter of fact, of savages who merely throw their dead into the brush, and who, nevertheless, believe in survival after death.

THE SAVAGE'S IDEA OF SOUL AND GHOST

The words "soul" and "ghost" are used synonymously in anthropological literature, as if they represented one and the same conception, however numerous its varieties. We shall in the rest of this chapter conform to this usage, although, in the next, we shall be led to ascribe a different meaning to these words.

Most, perhaps all, savages believe in a plurality of souls. Each man may possess two or even a much higher number of souls. This belief is found among populations as primitive as those of Australia. Ross reports that among the tribes of the Pennefather river it is believed that each man has two souls; one called *ngai*, resides in the heart; the other, *choi*, dwells in the placenta.[9] On the western coast of Africa, there is a belief in the *kra* which exists before the birth of the man to whom it belongs, and will continue after his death. The *kra* can absent itself from the living body and return to it at will. This happens usually in sleep, but it may also occur during waking, in which case the departure of the *kra* is indicated merely by a yawn. These same

[9] E. Durkheim; *Les Formes Elémentaires de la Vie Religieuse;* Paris; Alcan; 1912. Pages 368, 369.

people believe also in the *srahman*, a soul that begins its career only at the death of its possessor.

Remarkable exceptions to the ascription of a soul, or souls, to every individual are recorded: among the Gnanji, for instance, the women are thought to have no soul.[10] This is probably a belief of late origin, expressive of contempt for that sex.

The word "soul" assumes among savages a surprising variety of meanings, none of which is exactly that of the educated Christian. Even in Australia, the conception of the soul is far from simple. The descriptions given of it by the aborigines are in many respects amazingly contradictory. It is, of course, a material substance; for the savage does not know of spirit-existence independently of material bodies. Ghosts are usually invisible; only certain persons, for instance, old men or members of a superior race, can see them. Africans have been known to ask a white traveler to catch a troublesome ghost for them.

The soul is variously described as small, like a grain of sand, or of any size up to that of a giant. Its shape is said to be round, featureless, or quite similar to that of the living person to whom it belonged, or of any other conceivable appearance. It can pass through the smallest hole and crack, either because it partakes of the nature of the wind, or because of its smallness. It is, nevertheless, commonly represented also as eating, sleeping, and performing most, or all, of the functions characteristic of this life.

[10] Spencer and Gillen: *Northern Tribes of Central Australia;* pages 179, 546.

The relation of the soul to the body also evinces great varieties. During the life of the body, the soul is variously thought to be diffused throughout the body, or to be especially connected with the blood, or the breath, the heart, the liver, or some other organ. Its connection with the body involves growth and decay; on leaving the body, the souls of the young and vigorous are also young and vigorous, and the souls of the aged and infirm also old and infirm. We shall see that this belief, when it is consistently held, leads to curious and cruel customs. For some, the bodily shadow is the soul; for others, the reflection of oneself seen in water, or elsewhere, is the soul. It may be supposed that some regard both shadow and reflection as the soul. Not infrequently the breath is said to be the soul.

The soul can temporarily leave the living body. This happens particularly during sleep and other temporary losses of consciousness, such as swoons. According to many tribes, the soul remains connected with the corpse until complete decomposition has taken place. When the bones have become clean, the soul is held to have become completely free. Until then it had remained at or near the place of burial, now it can move to the land of spirits. It may, however, return to the living whenever it pleases or only on special occasions. This liberation of the soul from the dead body is such an important event in the history of the soul that henceforth it bears a new name: it has become a spirit.

It would be unreasonable to expect the savage to entertain only those ideas concerning the soul which

are consistent with each other. Primitive minds do not perceive contradictions obvious to a modern, trained mind. The savage frequently uses as a means of gratifying his desires, unembarrassed by logical requirements, his ill-determined and fluid notion of a something inhabiting and vitalizing the body and continuing to live after its death. In order that the soul may escape, the Hottentots and other populations, for instance, make a hole in the wall of the hut in which a person has just died. They then plug that hole and imagine that they have protected themselves against the return of the soul within the hut; for, they say, the ghost will not look for or not be able to find the other openings. In other circumstances, however, the same tribe ascribes to ghosts capacities which should, it seems, make the procedure just described ridiculous to the savage himself. We are here in the presence of a sort of unconscious deception practiced upon himself by the Hottentot in order to allay his fear of ghosts.[11]

THE SURVIVAL AFTER DEATH AND IMMORTALITY

Survival after death is not equivalent with immortality. Everywhere, even among the Austral-

[11] The mental trick illustrated above is not peculiar to the savage; it is, on the contrary, extremely common and precious to the civilized. One needs only listen for a while to a discussion, especially when it takes place between persons of little culture, to become aware of the presence of bare-faced subterfuges and of obviously illogical arguments by which each speaker seeks to protect his interests, or his pride. It is chiefly by this method that men, whatever the level of culture to which they belong, succeed in preserving a flattering opin-

ians, there are tribes which admit the final annihilation of some souls or classes of souls. At the same time they set no limit to the continuation of other souls. Among some tribes, the souls of the departed after having returned several times from the island of the dead to live in their former families in order to perform various kindly functions, are finally destroyed by a thunderbolt. The Tougans think that only the souls of noblemen are saved, that the others perish with their bodies. In one of the Solomon Islands, the ghosts of no account survive death only for a time. "All ghosts upon leaving the body swim . . . to two islands lying off Marau in Guadalcanar. The children chatter and annoy the elder ghosts, so they are placed apart upon the second island; men and women ghosts are together, they have houses, gardens, and canoes, yet all is unsubstantial. Living men cross to Marapa and see nothing; but there is water there in which laughter and cries are heard; there are places where water is seen to have been disturbed, and the banks are wet as if bathers had been there. . . . This ghostly life is not eternal. The mere *akalo* [the ghosts of ordinary people] soon turn into white ants' nests, which become the food of the still vigorous ghosts; hence a living man says to his idle son, 'When I die, I shall

ion of themselves. To say that the contestants are altogether aware of the defect of their arguments, would not always represent correctly their state of consciousness. But the vague sense of unrightness of which they may be cognizant is impotent before the will to self-assertion, which is the dominant factor in most discussion. This class of mental processes cannot be adequately understood without reference to the psychology of the so-called subconscious mental activity.

have ants' nests to eat, but then what will you have?'"[12]

Of the Fijian we read, "On the whole, when we survey the many perils which beset the way to the Fijian heaven, and the many risks which the souls of the dead ran of dying the second death in the other world or of being knocked on the head by the living in this, we shall probably agree with the missionary Mr. Williams in concluding that under the old Fijian dispensation there were few indeed that were saved."[13]

To be a chief or a shaman is in some tribes of North America the condition of access to the other world. In others, the old and the sick have little chance of standing the hardships of the journey; in still others, fire is thought to be fatal to souls.

If, as I have already reported, souls age with the body, the process of aging should go on in the other world and end with the death of the soul. Nevertheless, most savages seem to assume that souls do not age when once detached from the body. It would be, I surmise, more exact to say that usually they neither affirm nor deny the soul's independence of the effect of time; they simply do not think of the question.[14]

[12] R. H. Codrington; *The Melanesians;* Oxford; 1891. Page 260. Ghosts are sometimes cooked and eaten up by some giant ghost.

[13] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* page 467.

[14] This failure of the savage to take into consideration the effect of time upon persons who are supposed to be in most respects like himself is not surprising when we recall our own imagery of those from whom we have been long separated. They continue present to our memory with the physical appearance that was familiar to us. It is only when we ex-

The belief that in this life souls share the fortunes of the body, leads to practices most revolting to us. Some Australians, for instance, put their relatives to death before they are old in order that they may not be too feeble to care for themselves in the other world. I find in Frazer the following account of how a son lovingly strangled his aged mother. Strangling was considered "a more delicate and affectionate way" of dispatching relatives than to knock them on the head with a club.

On one occasion, the missionary, Mr. Hunt, "was called upon by a young man, who desired that he would pray to his spirit for his mother, who was dead. Mr. Hunt was at first in hopes that this would afford him an opportunity of forwarding their great cause. On inquiry, the young man told him that his brothers and himself were just going to bury her. Mr. Hunt accompanied the young man, telling him he would follow in the procession, and do as he desired him, supposing, of course, the corpse would be brought along; but he now met the procession, when the young man said that this was the funeral, and pointed out his mother, who was walking along with them, as gay and lively as any of

pect a person to return to us that we may make an effort to picture him under the changed appearance which years have probably worked.

For the rest, the savage might perfectly well think that men do age in the other world and yet place no limit to the process. The fact that even death by old age is often looked upon as meleficent sorcery shows how far removed these men are from connecting signs of age with the necessity of death. Among the Monumbo of German New Guinea, souls grow old and die, but they are not annihilated, for they are changed into animals and plants. Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* page 229.

those present, and apparently as much pleased. Mr. Hunt expressed his surprise to the young man, and asked him how he could deceive him so much by saying his mother was dead, when she was alive and well. He said, in reply, that they had made her death-feast, and were now going to bury her; that she was old; that his brother and himself had thought she had lived long enough, and it was time to bury her, to which she had willingly assented, and they were about it now. He had come to Mr. Hunt to ask his prayers, as they did those of the priest. He added, that it was from love for his mother that he had done so; that, in consequence of the same love, they were now going to bury her, and that none but themselves could or ought to do so sacred an office! Mr. Hunt did all in his power to prevent so diabolical an act; but the only reply he received was, that she was their mother, and they were her children, and they ought to put her to death. On reaching the grave, the mother sat down, when they all, including children, grandchildren, relations and friends, took an affectionate leave of her; a rope, made of twisted tapa (bark-cloth) was then passed twice around her neck by her sons, who took hold of it and strangled her; after which she was put into her grave with the usual ceremonies. They returned to feast and mourn, after which she was entirely forgotten as though she had not existed." [15]

These remarks and quotations will suffice to make it clear that survival is not equivalent to immortality: some souls may continue endlessly; it is in the nature of others to come to a "natural" end after

[15] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* pages 423, 424.

a certain lapse of time; these, and perhaps even the naturally immortal ones, may, moreover, be destroyed accidentally. In this, as in other important respects, the primary continuation belief is not to be assimilated with the modern immortality of the soul.

THE LIFE OF GHOSTS AND THEIR RELATION WITH THE LIVING; THE PRIMARY PARADISE

The more deeply one inquires into the customs and beliefs of the savage, the more one is amazed at their almost endless variety. It is evident that under the incentive of certain needs and desires, imagination has for a long time been elaborating in every thinkable shape a few fundamental notions. With regard to the nature and the fate of the soul, the more important conceptions of the savage proceed essentially from a desire to explain certain events and to define his relation to the ghosts. A knowledge of these relations is of paramount importance to the savage. His many other ideas concerning the dead have no deep roots; they are to be regarded as chiefly a play of the fancy, so that they belong to myth rather than to religion.

The separation which death makes between the living and the departed is much less radical than is commonly imagined. The dead, it is true, usually live in another country, but their world differs but little from that of the living, and they continue members of the social group to which they belonged when in the body. As the individual was in this life, so is he usually in the other: either strong or weak, courageous or cowardly, clever or stupid, rich or poor, young or old, healthy or sickly, happy or un-

happy. The kings remain kings, and the slaves, slaves. Ghosts and spirits can be spoken to, heard, seen. Miss Kingsley relates how she heard a negro speaking aloud to his dead mother, just as if she were beside him. Death makes a difference not much greater than results from initiation when a child becomes a full member of the social group.[16]

It is essential to an understanding of the relation of the living with their dead that the two periods frequently recognized in the fortunes of the soul should be borne in mind. The souls do not go to the land of the dead immediately after death. They are supposed to tarry near the grave and about their former dwellings until the end of the period of mourning, which appears to coincide roughly with the complete decomposition of the body. Then, they move to ghost-land, when their relation with their tribes' people becomes more distant, or at least less frequent. Certain tribes speak, in addition, of vagrant souls which, unable to get to the land of spirits, haunt this earth for a time or permanently.

The world of the dead is more or less vaguely and variously located, somewhere to the east or to the west, under the earth, in or above the sky, on the other side of a mountain or of a river, on an island, in a cave, in or under the earth, etc. The souls may also remain in the immediate neighborhood of the tribe and lodge themselves in trees, plants, stones or in any object whatsoever, and there wait for a chance to be re-born from a woman of the tribe to

[16] Lévy-Brühl: *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures:* Paris; Alcan; 2d ed.; 1912. Chap. VIII, especially 1 and 4.

which they belong. The Central Australians, for instance, "imagine that the spirits of the dead continue to haunt their native land and especially certain striking natural features of the landscape, it may be a pool of water in a deep gorge of the barren hills, or a solitary tree in the sun-baked plains, or a great rock that affords a welcome shade in the sultry noon. Such spots are thought to be tenanted by the souls of the departed waiting to be born again. There they lurk, constantly on the lookout for passing women into whom they may enter, and from whom in due time they may be born as infants. It matters not whether the woman be married or unmarried, a matron or a maid, a blooming girl or a withered hag; any woman may conceive directly by the entrance into her of one of these disembodied spirits; but the natives have shrewdly observed that the spirits show a decided preference for plump young women. Hence when such a damsel is passing near a plot of haunted ground, if she does not wish to become a mother, she will disguise herself as an aged crone and hobble past, saying in a thin cracked voice, 'Don't come to me. I am an old woman.' Such spots are often stones, which the natives call child-stones because the souls of the dead are there lying in wait for women in order to be born as children. One such stone, for example, may be seen in the land of the Arunta tribe near Alice Springs. It projects to a height of three feet from the ground among the mulga scrub, and there is a round hole in it through which the souls of dead plum-tree people are constantly peeping, ready to pounce out on a likely damsel. Again, in the terri-

tory of the Warramunga tribe the ghosts of black-snake people are supposed to gather in the rocks round certain pools or in the gum-trees which border the generally dry bed of a water-course. No Warramunga woman would dare to strike one of these trees with an axe, because she is firmly convinced that in doing so she would set free one of the lurking black-snake spirits, who would immediately dart into her body. They think that the spirits are no larger than grains of sand and that they make their way into women through the navel. Nor is it merely by direct contact with one of these repositories of souls, nor yet by passing near it, that women may be gotten with child against their wish. The Arunta believe that any malicious man may by magic cause a woman or even a child to become a mother: he has only to go to one of the child-stones and rub it with his hands, muttering the words, 'Plenty of young women. You look and go quickly.'" [17]

Long before ethical considerations have begun to influence the conception of the future life, the realm of the dead is made up of several places or divisions. Warriors, priests, women and children may each have a place of their own; there may be special abodes for the people who have been shot, for those who have been clubbed to death, for those who have been done to death by magic, etc. Among the *Muriks*, a tribe of Sarawak in Borneo, all except women who have died in child-birth and men who

[17] I take this from Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* pages 93, 94, who summarizes here information found on many pages of Spencer and Gillen's two volumes on the Australian tribes.

have died in warfare, go to *Long Kendi.* As the warriors come along the road leading to it, a guardian spirit turns them "down a rocky path, which leads to the country of *Pohun Nang* where there is always war and famine, so that these restless spirits can indulge themselves to their heart's content." The women who have died in child-birth have their own dwelling place. To the gods of these Muriks is assigned still another abode.[18] According to one account, the Fijians imagine that every man has two souls, a dark and a light one. "The dark soul departs at death to Hades, while the light soul stays near the place where he died or was killed."[19] I have already quoted a passage in which the ghosts are represented as swimming to two little islands. The ghosts of children live on one, and the ghosts of grown up people on the other.

The colors with which ghost-land is painted vary somewhat from tribe to tribe; these differences reflect no doubt social conditions and dominant temperamental characteristics. The world of the dead is usually neither better nor worse than that of the living. Among many tribes, however, a paradisiacal element appears: the land of the dead is described as a fortunate country abounding in food and of a pleasant climate, where work is unnecessary. These ideas are found in widely distant countries and among the more, as well as among the less primitive savages.

The tribes of central Australia, for instance, place ghost-land below the earth, in a well watered

[18] *The Sarawak Museum Journal;* 1911; Vol. 8; page 146.
[19] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* page 411.

land, enjoying a perpetual sunshine.[20] A similar belief exists among the Australians of New South Wales and of Victoria.[21] In German New Guinea, the Monumbo who, we are told, "are acquainted with no Supreme Being, no moral good or evil, no rewards, no place of punishment or joy after death, no permanent immortality," believe, nevertheless, that in the land of spirits the souls dwell without working or suffering. "Bethel-chewing, smoking, dancing, sleeping, all the occupations that they loved on earth are continued without interruption in the other world. They converse with men in dreams, but play them many a shabby trick, take possession of them and even, it may be, kill them. Yet they also help men in all manner of ways in war and the chase. Men invoke them, pray to them, make statues in their memory, which are called *dva* (plural *dvaka*), and bring them offerings of food, in order to obtain their assistance. But if the spirits of the dead do not help, they are rated in the plainest language." [22] It is worthy of note that these Monumbo are of an optimistic disposition. They are described as "cheerful and contented, proud of themselves and their country; they think they are the cleverest and most fortunate people on earth, and look down with pity and contempt on Europeans." [23] We have seen that the Fijians also

[20] Spencer and Gillen: *The Native Tribes of Central Australia.* Pages 513, 524.

[21] Matthews, "Ethnol. Notes on the Aboriginal Tribes of New South Wales and Victoria." *Jr. and Pro. of the Royal Soc. of New South Wales,* vol. XXXVIII, page 287.

[22] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* pages 228, 229.

[23] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* page 228.

seem to think of the other life as on the whole desirable. But if they frequently murdered in cold blood the invalid and the aged, on the ground that they would be happier in the other life, one should not forget another motive, probably not less influential for being unavowed, namely, the wish of those who executed the deed to be rid of an encumbrance. The dwelling place of the dead, when there is only one, is generally pictured by the North American Indians as a Happy Hunting Ground, in which the chief wishes of man are gratified without painful effort.[24]

To one acquainted with the universal fear of ghosts shown by the savage, and with the belief in the utterly wretched condition of all souls, entertained at the dawn of the historical period in the nations from which Europe derived its civilization, the widespread belief of primitive peoples in a paradise may come as a surprise. The presence of that belief does not prevent ghosts from being regarded by all savages as mischief makers, as causes of sickness, death, and poverty. One of the chief concerns of the savage is to make it impossible for the recently liberated ghost to return to those he leaves behind. The majority of the ceremonies connected with death and burial aim at preventing them from returning to the living, or at warding off their nefarious activities. Curious methods are in use to throw off the track the ghost who might try to return to the body or the hut just vacated. Among the Tuski of

[24] E. L. Moon Conard: *Les Idées des Indiens Algonquins relatives à la vie d'Outre Tombe;* Chap. III. Reprinted from *Rev. de l'Histoire des Religions;* 1900; Tome XLII.

Alaska "those who die a natural death are carried out through a hole cut in the back of the hut. This is immediately closed up that the spirit of the dead man may not find his way back."[25] Elsewhere for the same reason, the corpse is let out of the house through the floor or is carried two or three times around the house at top speed so as to bewilder him.

Even when unmistakable sorrow is felt at the death of a friend, his ghost is dreaded and every precaution may be taken to prevent his return. In speaking of the Algonquins, Mrs. Conard expresses the conviction that the relatives of the dead are usually affected by the loss of the deceased. She tells of an old Ojibway chief who would go alone to the tomb of his son and lament his departure, "Why have you gone so soon to the country of the dead?" "The frequent visits to the tomb of the deceased and the lamentations constitute the best proof of the affectionate feelings of the survivors, especially when these visits are not made at stated times."[26] Nevertheless, these Indians perform certain rites in order to drive these same souls away from their houses.

Lévy-Brühl notes instances in which the desire for the removal of the ghost from the proximity of his loving friends is naïvely expressed. "When a man is dying, his friends bring to him food and say: 'Be good; if you leave us, leave us for good.' Among the Igorotes of the Philippines, during the first days following death, the old women and then the old

[25] W. H. Dall: *Alaska and its Resources:* Boston; Lee and Shepard; 1870. Page 382.

[26] See Moon Conard: *Loc. cit.;* pages 58, 59.

men sing several times the following chant: 'Now you are dead. . . . We have given you everything that was necessary and made fitting preparations for burial. Do not come back to fetch any of your relatives or friends.' Similarly in Western Africa, the Reverend Nassau explains that the feelings of survivors toward a dead man are very much mixed. When they beg of him to come back to life, they are certainly sincere, they desire his return; but almost at the same time, appears the fear that the dead may come back not in his usual and sociable form but in the conditions of a disincarnated spirit, invisible and perhaps hostile." [27]

It should not be inferred from the universal fear of ghosts that they are all entirely malevolent. On the contrary, in all primitive populations there are ghosts who perform kindly offices. In Australia, they are "generally looked upon rather as beneficent, especially for the members of their families; . . . the soul of the father returns to help the growth of his children or grandchildren." [28]

EXPLANATION OF THE FEAR OF GHOSTS AND OF THE EVIL CHARACTER USUALLY ASCRIBED TO THEM

When attempting to account for the unpleasant character of the relations maintained by the living with the dead, we must ask ourselves what facts known to the savage are likely to affect the character he ascribes to ghosts and his attitude towards them. There are at least four of these: the liking for life,

[27] Lévy-Brühl: *Loc. cit.;* pages 367–370, 398–403.
[28] Durkheim: *Loc. cit.,* page 392.

the aversion to death itself, the fate of the earthly body, and the mystery surrounding the existence of the invisible ghosts. Let us consider these facts in the reverse order.

(a) Man's instinctive response to the presence of things not clearly seen or understood, is the recoil of fear and the attraction of curiosity. Ghosts are commonly supposed to approach the living during sleep, but no one can tell where they hide or what they will do. The passage quoted from Durkheim in which is affirmed the benevolence of certain ghosts, is immediately followed by these lines, "But it may happen that the [same] ghost behaves with real cruelty; everything depends on his mood and the way in which he is treated by the living." The lack of definite knowledge of the mode of existence of ghosts, of their desires, and of their intentions, awakens an uneasy alertness to possible dangers which readily turns into fear. Fear breeds antipathy; for, one cannot like that which keeps one continually in a state of fearful suspense. Under these circumstances, it unavoidably comes to pass that the commission of particular evil deeds is ascribed to ghosts: a person we dislike, and with whom we have to live, is soon blackened by numberless sins of omission and of commission, however blameless he may really be.

(b) The fate of the human and animal body, in so far as it rots, stinks, and disappears, leaving only bones, is perfectly well known to the savage. It would seem natural that in some vague way he should look upon the ghost as participating in the misery of the putrefying body, and that the repulsion felt

for it should pass to the ghost connected with it. It is a similar mental process that induces in many a dislike of automobiles and even of their owners because of the dust, the noise, and the danger they occasion.

The corpse is not connected in the mind of the savage with the ghost only, but usually also with mysterious, impersonal, magical powers. At times these seem to belong to the corpse, at times to the ghost itself. The nature of both magical power and ghost is determined in some respect by certain characteristics of the corpse; and, in turn, the behavior of the savage towards the corpse is in part the outcome of these two conceptions.

The more dangerous period for the living is, according to the savage, the one immediately following death; it lasts until the final mourning ceremonies, which mark the complete separation of the soul from the decaying body and its entrance into spirit-land. African natives explained to Miss Kingsley that the souls who harm surviving members of their families do not do so with evil intent; they behave badly because, until they are settled in the society of spirits, they are unhappy.[29]

Numerous customs testify to the connection established by the savage mind between the destitution of the body in the grave and the ghost. The placing of food and weapons in the graves, the keeping of fires on or near them, the sending of the widow after the ghost, and other widespread practices may indicate that the living do not understand how, without their help, the dead may have a tolerable time of it.

[29] Lévy-Brühl: *Loc. cit.;* pages 365, 366.

If we may see in these customs an expression of benevolence, we may also regard them as an effort to propitiate: kindness and fear may have operated together in the production of these practices.

When the last mourning rite has been celebrated — possibly several years after the death — the ghost is no longer supposed to roam among the living, unhappy and dangerous. He has definitely found his place in the abode of the dead and his relation with the living has become more distant. The customs of the Tarahumares of Mexico mark well the successive stages in the removal of the ghost from the proximity of the living. Three festivals are celebrated. "At the first, which takes place less than two weeks after the death, all those who are in mourning speak to the dead, the shaman first, begging him to let alone the living. . . . The third festival is the final effort to get rid of the dead. This ceremony comes to an end with a race between young men. 'They come back rejoicing because at last the dead has finally gone; . . . they show their contentment by throwing up their blankets, their coats, their hats. . . . The names given to these three ceremonies indicate respectively, the intention of providing food for the ghost, of renewing his provision, of giving him to drink.'

"But these same Tarahumares when once the final ceremony has been celebrated know that they need not fear any longer, and they act accordingly. 'They would see me without emotion,' says Mr. Lumholtz, 'remove the corpses of their dead, provided they had been buried a few years and the necessary ceremonies aiming at separating them from

this world had been celebrated. . . . A Tarahumare sold me the skeleton of his mother-in-law for a dollar.' "[30] Relations between the dead and the living are not usually altogether severed with the final ceremony, but the ghost no longer demands assiduous attention, and it has ceased to be a constant source of anxiety.

(c) The death crisis itself is also a repulsive fact. It is ordinarily objected to with all the strength of that most powerful instinct, the instinct for self-preservation. Here again it seems unavoidable that the dread of death should tend to pass upon the existence to which death leads.

The belief that most or all deaths are due to malevolent spirits could only increase the repulsion that may have been felt for the other life and its denizens.

(d) A liking for this life is, independently of the instinctive recoil from death, a cause of dislike for the other. A place to which we are compelled to go when we would rather remain where we are, can hardly be regarded with favor.

We may affirm, therefore, that the love of life and these three impressive facts, death, bodily decomposition, and the mystery surrounding the existence of ghosts, are not of a nature to make the savage think of the ghost, during the initial period of his existence, as a benevolent and satisfied being; on the contrary, they conspire to make of him an object of anxiety and dread. The calamities of human existence provide, moreover, what seems abundant proof of the evil propensity of ghosts.

[30] *Loc. cit.;* pages 375, 376.

Durkheim has offered another more ingenious and less simple explanation of the evil character ascribed to the ghost. According to him, this results from an effort on the part of the savage to account for the painfulness of his mourning customs. Here is the theory in the author's own words: —

"It is not only the relatives most directly affected who bring to the mourning assembly their personal grief, but society as a whole exercises upon its members a moral pressure to adjust their feelings harmoniously to the situation. If the social group were to allow its members to be indifferent to the blow received, and by which it has been diminished [the death of one of them], this would be equivalent to acknowledging that the group does not occupy in their hearts a sufficiently important place. . . . A family that would permit one of its number to die unmourned would thereby testify to a lack of moral unity and cohesion. . . . The individual, on his side, when firmly attached to his group, feels morally bound to participate in its sorrows and joys; to take no part in them would be to break the bonds which unite him to the collective life. . . . If the Christians, during Passion Week; if the Jews, on the anniversary of the fall of Jerusalem, fast and mortify themselves, it is not in order to give vent to a spontaneous sadness. In circumstances like these the emotion of the believer is not proportional to the uncomfortable abstinences which he endures. If he is sad, it is chiefly because he is compelling himself to be so; and he compels himself in order to affirm his faith. The attitude of the Australian during mourning is to be explained in the same manner. If he weeps, if he groans, it is not simply in order to express an individual sorrow; it is in order to fulfill a duty, of the existence of

which society would not fail to remind him should occasion arise."

Of course, the savage himself does not know the true cause of his practices. "When he attempts to interpret them, he is compelled to make up an altogether different explanation. He knows only that he feels bound to subject himself to painful treatment. As a sense of obligation naturally awakens the idea of a compelling will, he looks about him, seeking from whom may come the constraint he feels. Now, there is a power the reality of which seems to him certain, and which appears to answer the purpose; this is the soul liberated by death. This soul, of course, must be keenly interested in the consequences which its liberation may have upon the living, and the savage imagines, therefore, that if the living inflict torments upon themselves, it is in order to conform to the soul's claims. . . . On the other hand, since inhuman demands are ascribed to the soul, one is compelled to suppose that in leaving the body which it had so far animated, the soul loses all humane feeling. . . . The dead are not mourned because they are feared, but are feared because they are mourned." [31]

No one would contest that the greater number of mourning ceremonies are not purely, not even chiefly, the expression of personal feeling for the dead. Doubtless they manifest social coercion; but this fact does not necessarily imply the truth of Durkheim's deduction, namely that the objectionable character of the ghost is altogether and primarily a reflection of the unpleasantness of mourning customs. I see very well that the unpleasantness of these customs may tend to blacken the character of the ghost, but I cannot admit that because

[31] E. Durkheim: *Les Formes Elémentaries de la Vie Religieuse:* Paris; Alcan; 1912. Pages 571, 572, 573.

of this possible effect one is to set aside the more direct explanation which I have provided.

How shall we, in view of the facts I have recited, account for the existence among numerous savage tribes of a paradisiacal conception of the other life? The existence of circumstances producing fear of ghosts does not preclude that of factors of an opposite tendency. Given the belief in continuation after death, one does not see why at some time or other, and very early, human imagination prompted by the desire for happiness should not have dreamt of a delightful land abounding in all the things that make this life pleasant. This propensity, to which myths in various parts of the earth testify, and the adverse facts I have mentioned, urged man in two opposed directions; thus conflicting accounts of ghost-life arose. In this conflict, the belief in a happy future life seems to have suffered defeat, for we shall see that the idea of a paradise no longer existed at the dawn of the historical period among the peoples living about the Eastern end of the Mediterranean sea.

But why did the idea of a happy land of the dead go out of existence? I can only surmise in answer to this query that the destruction at death of the earthly body had gained such a decisive meaning, and that the information about the other life gleaned from apparitions of ghosts in diverse circumstances was such as to make ineffective any impulse that might have been present to conceive ghost life as a happy one. Not until new and powerful motives had made themselves felt, did it become possible for

man to transcend by faith the knowledge which had come to be interpreted as meaning unavoidable and final misery after death.

CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION TO THE OTHER WORLD AND THE RELATION OF MORALITY TO CONTINUATION AFTER DEATH

Usually the land of the dead is not reached without overcoming some obstacles. There are dangers to be avoided and ordeals to be successfully met before the ghost may be established in his new quarters. Some of these are merely creations of fantasy without moral significance: the savage has amused himself by inventing dramatic or comic incidents. Such is the case in the following story: —

The Fijians tell of a terrible giant armed with a great axe, who lies in wait for the souls. This giant makes no distinctions but strikes at all who attempt to pass. Those whom he wounds, never reach the happy country, but are doomed to roam rugged mountains, disconsolate. Those who escape, pass on till they come to one of the highest mountains of the islands. Somewhere "the path ends abruptly on the brink of a precipice, the foot of which is washed by a deep lake. Over the edge of the precipice projects a large steer-oar, and the handle is held either by the great god Ndengei himself, or, according to the better opinion, by his deputy. When a ghost comes up and appears ruefully over the precipice, the deputy accosts him. 'Under what circumstances,' he asks, 'do you come to us? How did you conduct yourself in the other world?' Should the ghost be a man of rank, he may

say, 'I am a great chief. I live as a chief and my conduct was that of a chief. I had great wealth, many wives, and ruled over a powerful people. I have destroyed many towns, and slain many in war.' 'Good, good,' says the deputy, 'just sit down on the blade of that oar, and refresh yourself in the cool breeze.' If the ghost is unwary enough to accept the invitation, he has no sooner seated himself on the blade of the oar with his legs dangling over the abyss, than the deputy-deity tilts up the other end of the oar and precipitates him into the deep water, far far below. A loud smack is heard as the ghost collides with the water, there is a splash, a gurgle, a ripple, and all is over. The ghost has gone to his account in Murimuria, a very second-rate sort of heaven, if it is nothing worse. But a ghost who is in favor with the great god Ndengei is warned by him not to sit down on the blade of the oar but on the handle. The ghost takes the hint and seats himself firmly on the safe end of the oar; and when the deputy-deity tries to heave it up, he cannot, for he has no purchase. So the ghost remains master of the situation, and after an interval for refreshment is sent back to earth to be deified." [32]

Accounts of similar ordeals are found in many places. Tribes in German New Guinea believe that a ladder is placed over a great water for the souls to pass over on their way to the land of the dead. A spirit who has the ladder in his keeping exacts gifts of all who wish to go by. If any attempt is made to sneak across without paying toll, the lad-

[32] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* pages 465, 466.

der is tipped up, the ghost falls and is drowned.[33]

Side by side with these merely imaginative stories of the dangers threatening the ghost on his journey, one finds indications of the advantage to the ghost of having possessed in his earthly life certain particular traits valuable to the tribe, or of having performed faithfully certain tribal customs. Could it have been otherwise? Could man have observed the worth to his tribe, and therefore to himself, of courage and loyalty, and not have conceived of a reward in the other life for those who had conspicuously possessed these virtues? As a matter of fact, one finds that very early and in many tribes warriors and chiefs are assigned to a special and a better heaven than the rank and file, or that, in some other way, the particularly important and useful individuals are favored. The first step towards the socialization of the conditions of admittance to the other world may perhaps be seen in these and similar beliefs: —

In Florida (Melanesia) the dead are met by a ghost who thrusts a rod into their noses to see whether the cartilage is pierced according to the customs of their tribe. Those whose noses are not pierced have much difficulty in making their way to the realm of the shades. In the Solomon Islands, it is the hands that are examined to see whether the ghosts bear the marks of the sacred Frigate Bird cut on them. Those who do not are cast into a gulf and perish. In Eastern Melanesia the ghosts must have their ears bored, and women who were not tattooed

[33] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* page 224.

on earth are chased by female ghosts "who scratch and cut and tear them with sharp shells, giving them no respite." If those who do not bear the marks mentioned in these illustrations are not admitted to ghost-land, it is because only those possessing them are acknowledged in life as full members of the tribe. In Samoa, for instance, as long as a young man had not been tattooed, he could not think of marriage, he was constantly an object of ridicule, he had not the right to speak in the company of men.[34] Any adult lacking the tribal mark was an alien.

The following beliefs illustrate in a more significant way the early use made — not with clear intent, of course — of the after life as a sanction for socially valuable conduct. In Northern Melanesia those who have been niggardly on earth are punished on their way to ghost-land. They hold that all breaches of etiquette or of the ordinary customs of the country will certainly meet with appropriate punishments in spirit-land.[35] If among the Fijians "the lot of a married ghost whose wives have not been murdered is hard, it is nevertheless felicity itself compared to the fate of bachelor ghosts. In the first place, there is a terrible being, called The Great Woman who lurks in a shady defile, ready to pounce upon him; and if he escapes her clutches, it is only to fall in with a much worse monster from whom there is no escape. So vigilant and alert is he that not a single unmarried Fijian ghost is known to

[34] Turner: *Samoa.* Page 88. Quoted by Lévy-Brühl: *Loc. cit.;* page 411.

[35] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* pages 350, 446, 405.

have ever reached the mansions of the blessed."[36] The Black Feet Indians of Saskatchewan deny admission to the future life to those who have spilled the blood of their tribes' people, and to women guilty of infanticide.[37]

When instead of punishing the ghost for the neglect of one or two valuable customs, he is made to stand a general examination into his conduct on earth, such for instance as is described in the "Book of the Dead," a great stride forward has been made; the ideas of social worth and of moral responsibility have become more definite. This stage had been reached in Egypt probably as early as the Middle Kingdom. Before that time, although the Egyptians had already attained a considerable civilization, righteousness was not among the conditions of entrance into the other world. We are told that that which enabled the King to secure a place in the land of the Sun, was his rank, his power, and his "equipped mouth," i. e., his knowledge of the ritual, religious and magical. King Pepi, for instance, became a glorious one "by reason of his equipped mouth." He was, it is true, to undergo a purification, but this might take place after his arrival in the sky; and, whether after or before, the bathing in the sacred lake was usually intended to produce nothing more than a ceremonial purification.

The "Book of the Dead" shows Osiris sitting as the judge of the dead in company with assessors.

[36] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* page 464, abbreviated.

[37] Moon Conard: *Loc. cit.,* page 87. Is the influence of Christian missionaries to be recognized here?

Before him stands the balance on which the heart of the deceased is to be weighed against Truth. The dead makes a confession in which he declares that he is free from a long list of sins. Many of the offenses which he disclaims having committed are mere breaches of religious or magical etiquette, but others make it clear that no man is now considered "justified" and fit to enter the happy world of the dead unless he declares himself free from all the ordinary sins. It is true that the soul's attitude before the heavenly court has nothing of the humility of a confession. The soul is *instructed* by the "Book of the Dead" to affirm his innocence of murder, stealing, cheating, lying, avariciousness, pride, covetousness, etc. This is not yet the genuine ethical relation that came to exist later on between moralized gods and sensitive consciences.

The transformation of the primary belief into an instrument of social control involves the appearance either of the belief in the destruction of the wicked at death, or of the existence of several abodes for the dead — of at least one place of reward and one of punishment. I do not propose to write a history of the differentiation of the original ghost-land into a heaven and a hell. My task is merely to indicate the influence of the realization of ethical values upon the primary conception of immortality. It is one of the most interesting, because definite, instances of the molding of a belief under the influence of social need.

Ethical conditions of admission to the other life did not spread from Egypt to the neighboring nations. They did not even remain a vital force in the

Egyptian religion itself; they shared the general deterioration which overtook the nation. Neither among the Babylonians nor among the Greeks, is there any indication of a separation of the dead on a moral basis. "There is nothing to show that among the Babylonians, either among the populace or in the schools, a belief arose in a paradise whither privileged persons were transported after death; nor is any distinction made by them between the good and the bad, so far as future habitation is concerned. All mankind, kings and subjects, virtuous and wicked go to Aralu. Those who have obtained the good will of the gods receive their reward in this world by a life of happiness and good health."[38] In Greece, all men at death went to Hades. The two exceptions we shall discuss in another connection stand quite outside our present line of thought; for, neither Menelaus nor Ganymede passed through death, and their translation was not a reward for virtue. Elysium, whereto the former was conveyed is not a Walhalla for heroes, nor a Paradise for the good.

In these nations, destiny held in store the same lot for every man, and that lot was a miserable one. It required apparently the moral energy of the Hebrew people to transform again the idea of continuation after death into an instrument of retributive justice and to introduce it, as a part of the Christian religion, throughout the civilized world. The earliest indication of a separation of the good from the wicked is found in Isaiah[39] (about 330 B. C.) by

[38] Morris Jastrow: *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria;* 1898. Page 578.

[39] Chapter XXVI: 1–19.

whom resurrection is attributed only to the just. But it is resurrection on this earth, not life in heaven which the prophet announces. In Daniel [40] (about 160 B. C.) one reads, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." In the Book of Enoch is found the mention of four caves. The Angel Raphael explains that they are to receive the dead until the great day of judgment. In one of the caves, there is a bright spring of water intended for the spirits of the righteous. Another cave is for the sinners; there they shall remain "in great pain until the great day of judgment and punishment and torment of the accursed forever, so that there may be retribution for their spirits." [41]

The consideration of the conditions of admission to the other life has brought us face to face with the much discussed problem of the relation of ethics to religion. Diametrically opposite views are expressed and hotly defended regarding this relation. Some would find in religion the origin of all morality. It is, they say, "an incontestable fact that primitive morality stands in very close connection with primitive religion, and indeed that the beginnings of all social customs and legal ordinances are directly derived from religious notions and ceremonial practices." Others affirm that "a mass of facts demon-

[40] Chapter XII: 2.

[41] R. H. Charles: *A Critical History of the Doctrine of the Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity;* Oxford; 1912. Chapter XXII.

strate that originally the religious feeling is not only foreign to morality, but is in contradiction with it." Let us stop a moment to consider the meaning of what we have learned regarding the relation of morality to the conception of immortality.

The problem is no longer one for speculation.[42] The facts mentioned in the preceding pages, incomplete as they are, suffice nevertheless to show that moral values do not exist in men's ideas of the conditions of admittance to the other life before they are recognized in earthly relations. The value of courage and of the observance of customs making for tribal cohesion and coöperation, are not first given as condition of admission to a happy land beyond, and later discovered to be essential to the prosperity of the social group. Long before King Pepi thought he could gain heaven by the exertion of mere magical power, he appreciated in his people the elementary virtues they practiced, and he enforced them in the lands under his law. Much later only did these virtues appear in the judgment of Osiris as conditions of admission to a happy life beyond death.

Similarly the Babylonians, the Greeks, and the Hebrews, centuries before the appearance of moral considerations in their conception of immortality, were alive to the importance of "righteousness." Little by little, out of the pains and the joys of earthly existence, moral values won recognition. Then, and only then, did it occur to Yahweh to prefer justice and benevolence to the slaughter of sacrificial bullocks; then only did he cease to punish the

42 See E. Westermarck: *The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas.*

innocent with the guilty. We shall see in a subsequent chapter how from the moment Yahweh was supposed to hold each individual responsible for his own deeds, the idea of the insufficiency of this earthly life in order to satisfy the demands of justice came to the front and prepared the way for the new immortality.

The notion of immortality, like that of gods, became gradually a pedagogical device in the interest of social and individual morality. That is why in the heaven and the hell described by the ethical religions there is no parity between the reward and the virtue of the rewarded, or between the punishment and the guilt of the punished; all are rewarded or punished alike. In a judgment founded exclusively on the demands of justice, an eternity of bliss and an eternity of torture would be allotted to no one. If, however, to an imperfect sense of justice be added a desire to act as powerfully as possible upon the living, both to encourage them to do good and to deter them from doing evil, then the current notions of heaven and of hell may come into existence. It is, of course, unnecessary to suppose that in the formation of these conceptions man worked with a fully conscious purpose.

Present knowledge regarding the relation of ethics to religion contradicts both the opinions we have quoted: morality is not derived from religion; and religion is not in contradiction with morality. Rather must we say that morality begins in human social relations, and passes from them to the relations maintained with the other life and with the gods. Or, if one prefers to consider ghosts and gods

as inseparable elements of the primary social organism, then we should say that morality is born in that all-embracing psychical atmosphere. But it does not follow from that fact that the rise and development of morality are conditioned by belief in gods and in immortality. Merely human relations are sufficient to the production of ethical appreciations. The invisible ghosts and gods would never have been thought interested in the morality of the tribe, had not the leaders realized the importance of courage, of loyalty, of respect for neighbors' possessions and of the other elementary virtues. It is when the disastrous consequence of their absence became evident that the gods were made to sanction these virtues: Gor or no God, immortality or no immortality, the essential morality of man would have been what it is.[43]

[43] It may happen that a tribal god falls below the ideal of a chief. Miss Kingsley in a description of the very interesting relations maintained by a chief of the west coast of Africa with his god, reports that to her oft repeated question, "Is he good?" a negative answer was regularly given by the natives, except when they had been under the influence of the missionaries. "No," they say firmly, "he is not what you call good; he lets things go too much, he cares about himself only." And she adds, "I have heard him called 'lazy too much, bad person for business,' and a dozen things of that sort." Mary H. Kingsley: *The Forms of Apparition in West Africa,* Proc. of Soc. for Psychical Research., Vol. XIV; 1898; pages 334, 335.

This god, like the god to whom the contemporary Christian prays for rain and sunshine, supplicates for help in war, and to whom he returns thanks for bloody successes, has lagged behind human progress; he has not kept pace with the standards of the best among those who worship him.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN OF THE GHOST-IDEA, AND THE DIFFERENTIATION OF THE GHOST FROM THE SOUL

I. THE ORIGIN OF THE GHOST-IDEA

The descriptions of the preceding chapter bring out in high relief two characteristic traits of the belief [1] in survival, (a) Continuation is as firmly and universally held among savages as the belief in the existence of any object perceived by the senses. (b) There is no evidence that the savage ever concerns himself with his own fate after death. His belief in continuation expresses itself merely in a concern for the action of ghosts upon him while he is in this world.

These two traits should prove useful guides in a

[1] It was hardly possible for me, when speaking of continuation after death, to always use the terms "idea," "conception," and "belief" according to strict psychological usage. As a matter of fact, as soon as the conception of continuation dawned upon the savage, it was accepted, acted upon, as if it corresponded to an external reality. So that, for the savage, it never was a mere conception, but always a belief. I have used the word "conception" whenever I wished to designate the content and the form of the belief, rather than the fact of its being accepted as corresponding to an external reality. By a permissible license, "idea" has been used, in this connection, synonymously with "conception," and, in some cases, with "belief."

search for the origin of the belief. They seem to indicate that it is in no degree born of a desire for continuation — due, for instance, to the realization of the briefness and incompleteness of this life; or to an instinctive recoil before annihilation at death — but, rather, that it is imposed upon the believer, independently of his wishes, just as the belief in the existence of dangerous animals lurking in the nearby forest.

It is obvious that a sensory demonstration, witnessed by every one, of the existence of ghost would produce a belief possessing the universality and the firmness actually belonging to that belief; whereas an inference, whether from objective facts or from subjective experiences, might not present these characteristics. And it is equally obvious that had the belief been in any substantial degree the product of desire, it would have been conceived so as to gratify the desire, or desires, from which it had sprung.

To these theoretical remarks upon the most probable kind of origin of the ghost-conception, should be added that to infer from any sort of fact the existence of objects not perceived by the senses, involves mental processes of a higher order than direct perception, whether illusory or real. To have evolved the ghost-idea because, for instance, of a discontent with destruction at death, would imply a creative activity greatly superior to the one involved in mistaking a mental image for an objective reality.

The proclivity of untutored man to personify natural phenomena is well known. The savage clothes in a more or less definite human or animal shape the

power of the cloud, the wind, the thunder, the stream, the cataract, etc. As a consequence of this proneness, he lives surrounded by a world of usually invisible agents conceived in the likeness of man or of animals. This we know. But we are not completely informed regarding the moment when this personification of nature began. We possess no fact that would enable us conclusively to place the time of the appearance of that mental habit with reference to the appearance of the belief in survival after death in the form of ghost. The probability is, however, that personification of the more striking natural phenomena preceded the ghost-belief. For, the former lies nearer at hand than the latter. How easy and natural it is to personify forces that are now regarded as physical, is made evident by the behavior of children. Hardly have they begun to talk, when they ask after the cause of the manifestations of power they observe. A very early solution of the problem takes the form of the personification of the power: it is a bear that made the noise heard in the dark room.[2]

It is not at all necessary to the validity of the theory of the origin of the belief in ghosts we are about to set forth, that that belief should have been preceded by the personification of nature. Should it have been so, however, the belief in ghosts would have arisen more readily, since man would have been

[2] I do not imply here that animism was, as E. B. Tylor maintained, the first philosophy, but merely that personification was a very early process indeed. On the question of animism and primitive dynamism, see chapter four of *A Psychological Study of Religion.*

already familiar with the invisible existence about him of man-like agents. Our problem is in any case substantially different from that of the origin of the personification of natural forces. We are to account for the conviction that, after death, human beings continue to exist in a form and with habits similar to those that were his before death, even though the body decomposes and falls to pieces.

With these introductory considerations in mind, let us ask, "What is, or what are the probable sources of the conception of survival after death?" Are there not striking and frequent experiences of a perceptual character, belonging to all or to most men however primitive, which would provide both the ghost-conception itself and the demonstration of its objective truth?

MEMORY-IMAGES EXTERIORIZED UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTION

Let us try to place ourselves in the situation of primitive man when in the presence of death and of the corpse. The simplest possible reaction to that situation does certainly not involve the thought that, somehow or other, there is, besides the visible corpse, a something else, invisible, capable of acting like a human person and genetically connected with the dead person. The simplest reaction is that of the animal who betrays in his behavior no such belief. It is, however, greatly doubtful that this simplest attitude ever could have been that of man.

When the dead was a person of mark — it does not much matter in what way — there remained a vivid memory of him. May not the chief, the war-

rior, the trusted comrade, have appeared at times to the mind's eye in concrete situations full of emotional quality? And may not these experiences have been vivid enough to call forth overt reactions, a cry, a word, a movement of the hand or of the whole body? Any one who dreams in sleep, may dream when awake. We know enough of the savage and of the young child to affirm that they are at times moved by revived past experiences or by creations of their fancy. May not the belief in survival have had this origin?

I am not asking whether *ordinary* memory-images could have sufficed to produce the belief in continuation. Still less am I supposing that the savage *usually* confuses his idea of an object with the object itself, that he fails to discriminate between the thing thought of and the thing itself. To systematically mistake the thing thought of for one actually present to the senses, would be to fail in that which is a primary condition of existence. A being who should usually suffer from that confusion could have had but the briefest of existence. The very function of memory-images, the usefulness to which they owe their existence, involves this discrimination. That which I suggest is that under specific conditions, for instance death and the presence of the corpse, memory-images may be so vivified as to be taken for external realities.

THE "SENSE OF PRESENCE"

Even in the absence of perception by any one or several of the five senses, an irresistible "sense" of the presence of some one may be experienced. Hal-

lucinations of this kind form a class by themselves, instances of which may be found in religious biographies and in the *Reports of the Society for Psychical Research.* I do not know that any attention has been paid them in connection with the origin of the belief in survival after death. A classical instance of this type of hallucination is provided by St. Theresa.[3] She relates that in 1559 she had for the first time the "sensation of the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ." Subsequently, she became familiar with hallucinatory-images (pseudo-hallucinations) and hallucinations. At first, however, none of the five senses were involved. She tells us that she saw Christ neither with the eyes of the body, nor with those of the soul. By this she means that her experience involved neither visual perception nor visual image. Yet, it was a specific and convincing experience of the presence of Christ, not to be assimilated with the mere thought of some one's presence.

Experiences of this sort, though rare, come to most of us in our religious life or outside of it. I have collected a considerable number of spontaneous instances of them, and produced others experimentally for a psychological study of prayer. The following is related by a trustworthy person.

"It was evening. I was in my room upstairs, dressing, in order to join the family waiting for me downstairs. I could hear plainly the voice of my brother talking in the sitting-room. The electric lights were up in my room, the door of which was open. Suddenly, I was aware of the presence of my

[3] *Autobiography.* Chapter XXV.

sister back of me. I had neither seen nor heard her come in. I spoke to her. As she did not answer, I turned round. I was alone in the room. I never was so surprised in my life, for I felt as certain that she was there, as if I had seen her in the clearest of light. I remained for some time thrilled and dazed; it took me some time to regain my composure. I did not say anything to the family, because I thought they would make fun of me."

The characteristics of the sense of presence to which attention should be paid are, (1) the absence not only of the ordinary sensory indications of the presence of a person, but also, at least initially, of any illusion of sight, sound, or touch; (2) nevertheless, the conviction of presence possesses the concreteness belonging to actual perception. In this, it separates itself clearly from the kind of assurance due to inference, as when from the movement of a light across the windows of a house, the presence of a person in it is inferred.

Whence this mastering sense of external reality in the absence of the ordinary perceptions? Without entering here into a long psychological explanation, we may say that the essential constituents of the experience of the presence of a person, in a case of ordinary perception, are neither sight, nor sound, not even touch; but the very complex sensory-motor activities which commonly follow upon these perceptions. When we see some one, and "feel" his presence, our whole psycho-physical attitude is modified; the facial and bodily expressions are altered, feelings and emotions are generated — feelings and emotions which differ with the person in the presence

of whom we are — and, in addition, thought is given a new direction; it centers now about our relations with the person of the presence of whom we are aware. Unless these various, highly complex activities are set up, the actual perception of the person does not produce the particular experience described here by the phrase " sense of presence "; there is instead merely an awareness of a presence, without the warm sense of reality which belongs to it when upon sight follows the multiple reactions I have indicated. The mere seeing a person to whom we are indifferent, who does not " get hold " of us; and that which happens to the school-boy in the presence of his master, the lover descrying the beloved, or the mother hearing the voice of her child, are experiences clearly different; the latter usually include the sense, or feeling of a presence; the former does not, it is merely a knowledge of a presence. The sophisticated person himself cannot, while the experience is upon him, resist the sense of presence, although, afterwards, he may call it an hallucination.

This psychological explanation affirms, in short, that the sense of presence is conditioned essentially not by the report of any or all of the five senses, but by reaction-processes which take place when we are in the presence of a person who does not leave us cold. The visual or other external sensations which commonly initiate these essential responses are, according to this theory, not the only possible determinants of these reactions; they may be otherwise initiated.

But, whether this theory be adequate or not, the fact itself is not to be questioned: there are those

among us who, under the conditions I have described, have vivid experiences of the presence of absent persons. If we may assume that original man was subject to experiences of this sort, their bearing upon the origin of the belief in continuation after death is obvious. As to the probability of that assumption, I can only say that I know of no reason that would discredit it.

I have attempted to show that the memory-image, or, in the absence of an image, the idea of a dead person is vitalized into an irresistible sense of presence whenever the reactions which are the essential conditions of that experience are produced. I have also suggested that death and the presence of the corpse are circumstances which may bring about this result. The experiences of the type I have described under the name " sense of presence " demonstrate, furthermore, that obscure circumstances may, in the absence of any of the causes we should naturally look for, lead to the realization of the conditions of the feeling of the presence of a person not bodily present. That the ghost-belief may have been due to this class of experience, will appear the more probable when it is observed that it involves only the simplest mental operations.

DREAMS

In his epoch-making work, *Primitive Culture*,[4] Edward B. Tylor derives the belief in ghosts and spirits

[4] *Primitive Culture.* Vol. I, Chapter XI.

We read in Hobbes' *Leviathan,* " And for the matter, or substance of the Invisible Agents, so fancied, they could not by natural cogitation, fall upon any other conceit, but that it was the same with that of the Soule of man; and that the

from dreams and trances.[4] After having enjoyed for several decades unquestioned assent, objections are now raised against that theory, and efforts are made to replace it by other theories.

It is sometimes affirmed as an objection to the dream origin of the ghost-idea, that children regard dreaming as a matter of course, that they realize the difference between dreams and waking, and that "there is no case on record of a child inferring from dreams the existence of a soul, or of a reality different from the phenomenal."[5] It is no doubt true that children take dreams as something natural, and that usually they do not regard them as realities; but it does not follow from this that they never do

Soule of man was of the same substance with that which appeareth in a Dream, to one that sleepeth; or in a Looking-glasse, to one that is awake; which, men not knowing that such apparitions are nothing else but creatures of the Fancy, think to be reall and externall Substances; and therefore call them Ghosts."

This passage is sometimes misunderstood. The preceding paragraph makes it clear that Hobbes does not affirm that dreams are the cause of the idea of invisible agents. Dreams gave merely, as he puts it, the "matter, or substance of the idea of Invisible Agents." The idea itself originated from the "perpetual fear, always accompanying mankind in the ignorance of causes." This fear "must needs have for object something. And therefore when there is nothing to be seen, there is nothing to accuse, either of their good, or evil fortune, but some Power or Agent *invisible*."

Leviathan, ed. A. R. Waller; 1904. Chapter XII, page 71.

Cicero speaks of apparitions in dreams, if not as the origin of the belief, at least as the chief cause of its persistence and extension. See Gaston Boissier: *La Religion Romaine d'Auguste aux Antonins:* Paris; Hachette; 1878. Vol. I, page 265.

[5] Ernest Crawley: *The Idea of the Soul:* London; A. and C. Black; 1909. Pages 13–14.

so. The child-study literature provides sufficient examples of children who, when awake, behave for a while as if they expected to encounter the objects of their dreams.

I do not think that the so-called "make believe" plays of imaginative children would bear out the statement that they never believe in the reality of the creations of their fancy. That which is true, is that their belief is fleeting. This is probably sufficiently accounted for by the attitude of the adult towards these dreams and fancies: he denies them, in words and in action. What we know of children, leads rather to the opinion that were a company of them, including some of the imaginative ones, left to themselves, they would probably develop a belief in invisible beings and enter into some kind of relation with them.

We are in the habit of separating sharply the perceptions of waking life from dreams; to the former only do we ascribe objective reality. For the savage, however, dreams and visions are equally real with waking perceptions. Spencer and Gillen [6] tell us that "what a savage experiences during a dream is just as real to him as what he sees when he is awake. The natives have a very definite conception of the spirit part of an individual, and imagine that during sleep it can and does wander about freely." A Cherokee Indian who has dreamt that he was bitten by a snake-ghost, must follow the same treatment as if he had been bitten by a snake when awake,

[6] *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia:* London; Macmillan; 1904. Page 451.

otherwise the place would swell and ulcerate, perhaps immediately or even years afterwards.[7] Sir Everard im Thurn relates the following incident:

"One morning, when it was important to me to get away from camp on the Essequibo River at which I had been detained for some days by the illness of some of my Indian companions, I found that one of the invalids, a young Macusi, though better in health, was so enraged against me that he refused to stir, for he declared that, with great want of consideration for his weak health, I had taken him out during the night and had made him haul the canoe up a series of difficult cataracts. Nothing could persuade him that this was a dream, and it was some time before he was so far pacified as to throw himself sulkily in the bottom of the canoe. At that time we were all suffering from a great scarcity of food, and, hunger having its usual effect in producing vivid dreams, similar effects frequently occurred. More than once the men declared in the morning that some absent men, whom they named, had come during the night, and had beaten or otherwise maltreated them; and they insisted on much rubbing of the bruised parts of their bodies." [8]

No one acquainted with primitive peoples has ever denied that they give to dreams and visions the interpretation I have illustrated. But belief in the

[7] James Mooney: *Report of the Bureau of Ethnol.*, 1897–98, XIX; page 295.

[8] Quoted by Edward Clodd in *Animism:* London; Archibald Constable and Company; 1905. Pages 31–32, from *The Indians of Guiana.*

objective reality of dreams and visions does not necessarily imply that the conception of ghost arose from these experiences. The belief in the reality of dreams might be a consequence of these ideas, instead of their cause. Such is the opinion of Durkheim. But his attack upon the accepted theory [9]— presumably the strongest that can be made — fails altogether to show the inadequacy of that theory to account for the production of the idea of, and of the belief in survival after death. I submit in small print Durkheim's animadversions and my own counter criticism.

1. The belief in souls or ghosts is not the simplest way to account for dreams and visions. Why should not man instead have imagined that he could see at a distance through all kinds of obstacles? This is a simpler idea than that of a double made of a semi-invisible, ethereal substance.

This explanation might be the simpler one if, in dreams, the person dreamt of and the dreamer himself were not often together. When they are both in the same hut, or at the foot of the same tree, will the assumption of sight through an obstacle be pertinent? Certainly dreams of this description will require another explanation.

2. Many dreams are refractory to the ghost-interpretation; for instance, dreams of things that we have done in the past. The double might transport himself into the future, but how could he live over again the past existence of the body to which he belonged? How could a man when awake really believe that he has taken part in events which he knows to have taken place long

[9] *Loc. cit.*, pages 78–91, 382–386.

ago? It is much more natural that he should think of memories since these at least are familiar to him.

It is not at all necessary that the ghost-theory should fit all dreams. Certain dreams might remain a mystery, or be explained otherwise than by the existence of souls,— as memories, for instance. I do not know whether as a matter of fact the savage does this. But whether he does or not, it is evident that a great many dreams could not possibly be explained by him as recollections.

3. How could the savage be so stupid and non-inquisitive as not to be impressed by the fact that the person whose alleged double has conversed with his own double while he slept, had also had dreams that same night and was with another person than his own double? There is, thinks Durkheim, some *naïveté* in the blind credulity ascribed to primitive man by this theory.

The *naïveté* thus attributed to the savage does not seem to be excessive. Certain beliefs of some of our contemporaries are almost as childish. For the rest, this objection does not refer to ghosts surviving after death, but only to "doubles" able to leave the body during sleep.

4. Even though the ghost-explanation should be sufficient to account for all dreams, it would remain unlikely that man ever sought so early for an explanation of his dreams; they are too infrequent, and too fleeting, to have produced "a system of belief as important as that of survival after death. They may at best have served to confirm the idea, when once in existence." "What is dreaming to us? How small a place it holds . . . and how surprising it is that the unfortunate Australian spends so much energy in evolving a theory of it."

To this last objection, I answer that in order to occasion the belief in ghosts, it is not necessary that every individual should frequently have startling dreams. Often enough dreams are so vivid and so painful, or so elating, that I do not see how they could escape the attention of the savage when he wakes from them. When, in addition to possessing an intense emotional quality, they happen to be violently contradicted by some experience of waking life immediately following, it seems inadmissible that an explanation should not be sought. Suppose, for instance, that a savage feeling in a dream the hands of his enemy around his throat, awakens as he plunges his knife through his enemy's heart. Imagine further that as he rises panting, there, close to him, stands whole and hearty, the enemy he has just killed. Under these circumstances, most savages would be conscious of a riddle, would feel the need of an explanation; and at least some of them might, it seems to me, accept the actual existence of a "double." From that to the essential elements of the ghost theory, the steps are easy enough for primitive man to take.

To Durkheim's statement that there is a marked disproportion between the effect of the ghost-idea and its cause, when that cause is supposed to be dreams, this answer is sufficient: circumstances favoring, insignificant causes may produce gigantic effects. Once in existence, the idea of survival was the more likely to spread and to throw down deep roots in that it was a marvelously interesting idea and that its field of usefulness as a principle of explanation was not limited to dreams and visions. If ghosts exist, then a host of facts may be explained: ghosts bring them about! What idea could be better fitted to captivate the imagination and to stir credulous persons to their depths than that of the active presence about them of those who were their companions or predecessors on earth?

VISIONS

To dreams must be added the visions of waking life, of fever, and of other abnormal conditions. The mentally sound savage is not less, but more subject to visions than the sound-minded civilized. The hallucinations of waking life are, on the whole, more startling than dreams in their effect upon the seer. This, for the very reason that they take place during the waking life; that circumstance brings them in closer connection with the waking consciousness, and makes it more difficult to ignore them or to dismiss them as irrelevant. To the witnesses, the dramatic behavior of the hallucinated may convey, more vividly and irresistibly than a verbal account, a sense of invisible presences.

It is well known that persons of great mental distinction and ability, as well as commonplace ones, have been favored by or plagued with visions of such vividness and convincingness that they have not been able to escape belief in their reality. In many instances such visions have played a determining rôle in great social movements, particularly in religion.

The savage is not as well equipped as the civilized to resist the intrinsic claims of visions to authenticity. The profound influence which a gifted savage, suffering from occasional hallucinations, might exercise upon his contemporaries, can hardly be overestimated. It is, I think, one of the errors of anthropologists not to have taken sufficiently into account, when tracing origins, the unusual person, the genius. For, among savages also there are

leaders, originators; and their function is no less considerable than among us. The recognition, under which we are now in some respects suffering, of the fundamental social nature of man and of his profound and multiple dependence upon his physical and psychical environment, accounts probably for a degree of blindness to individual achievements in social development. Among savages, as among us, and in the same sense as among us, general beliefs have had individual origins.

The visions of waking life are, it is true, unusual experiences, unknown to the great majority of civilized beings; but they are far more frequent among the ignorant, uncritical, and easily impressed savage. Who will venture to affirm that when supported by the universal experience of dreams and of vivid memory-images, and by the sense of presence, no serious significance can belong to visions in the production of the belief in ghosts because they are not common enough?

These four types of related experiences, the exteriorization of vivid memory-images, the sense of presence, dreams, and the visions of waking life, all possess, if in various degrees, the qualifications required to lead to the savage's belief in survival after death. They are each psychologically equivalent to a direct sensory apprehension of survival; thus, they do not imply intelligence of a higher level than can be predicated of any one possessing speech, however rudimentary. These experiences, furthermore, all point not to a paradise promising the gratification of universal desires, but to such a lot as is actually ascribed to the ghost.

Are we to hold that these four related types of experience, each contributed equally to the formation of the belief in survival after death, or that one or several of them were the determinant factors, and that the others served merely to confirm the belief? To these queries I cannot give any answer; and it does not seem to me very important that we should be able to answer them, since we have, in any case, discovered and described the class of experiences from which the belief arose. It is not the product of an inference, it is not an interpretation, but simply the consequence of a lack of the ability to discriminate certain merely subjective experiences from the perception of external objects.

The causes of the idea of survival and of belief in it set forth in the preceding pages were probably supplemented, and the conception they produced modified, by certain naïve convictions, innate yearnings, and by diverse observations which we shall now rapidly consider.

The Natural Endlessness of Man.— Among many tribes are found myths presupposing the natural endlessness of man. Australian natives speak of ancestors who never died. They disappeared from view without passing through death and bodily decomposition. A well known Babylonian-Hebraic story explains the introduction of death into the world as the consequence of the evil deeds of man. In many tribes now living, all forms of death are looked upon as the work either of magic or of spirits. These tribes are probably at a lower level of development than others, such as the Kafirs and the Melanesians, among whom

a third cause is known: "natural" death. These people "make up their minds as the sickness comes whether it is natural or not. The more important the individual who is sick, the more likely his sickness is to be ascribed to the anger of a ghost whom he has offended, or to witchcraft. No great man would like to be told that he was ill by natural weakness or decay." [12]

Mr. Dudley Kidd tells us that according to the natives of South Africa, "to start with, there is sickness which is supposed to be caused by the action of ancestral spirits or by fabulous monsters. Secondly, there is sickness which is caused by the magical practices of some evil person who is using witchcraft in secret. Thirdly, there is sickness which comes from neither of these causes, and remains unexplained. It is said to be 'only sickness, and nothing more.' This third form of sickness is, I think, the commonest. Yet most writers wholly ignore it or deny its existence. It may happen that an attack of indigestion is one day attributed to the action of witch or wizard; another day, the trouble is put down to the account of ancestral spirits; on a third occasion, the people may be at a loss to account for it, and so may dismiss the problem by saying that it is merely sickness. It is quite common to hear natives say that they are at a loss to account for some special case of illness. . . . In some cases they do not even trouble to consult a diviner; they speedily recognize the sickness as due to natural causes. In such a case it needs no explanation. If they think that some friends of theirs know of a remedy, they will try it on their own

[12] R. H. Codington: *The Melanesians;* page 194.

initiative, or may even go off to a white man to ask for some of his medicine. . . . The Kafirs quite recognize that there are types of disease which are inherited, and have not been caused by magic or by ancestral spirits." [13] There is here the beginning at least of a recognition of what civilized man calls "natural" causes.

We may note in passing some of the terrible consequences of the belief in the magical cause of death. In many tribes, deaths of this sort result in the deaths of not only one but, at times, a dozen or more suspected persons who are put through a murderous ordeal supposed to be fatal to the guilty person only. "A French official tells us that among the Neyaux of the Ivory Coast similar beliefs and practices are visibly depopulating the country, every single natural death causing the death of four or five persons by the poison ordeal, which consisted in drinking the decoction of a red bark called by the natives *boduru*. At the death of a chief, fifteen men and women perished in this way. The French government had great difficulty in suppressing the ordeal; for the deluded natives firmly believed in the justice of the test and therefore submitted to it willingly in the full consciousness of their innocence." [14]

These two conceptions, the idea of the natural deathlessness of man and that of continuation *after death*, are of course far from identical; the former,

[13] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* pages 55, 56. The French anthropologists, Durkheim, Lévy-Brühl, Mauss, Hubert, affirm without hesitation the universality of this belief.

[14] Frazer: *Loc. cit.;* page 52. Lecture II contains a selection of savage practices regarding the causes of death.

which sees in death the result of accidental causes, is consistent with belief in annihilation at death; the latter, which considers death as an unavoidable, natural event, is consistent with the affirmation of the continuation of life in the face of the startling fact of death.

But why should man ever have imagined that, were it not for evil intervention, he would never have known death? Because life implies its own continuation. The more intensely one lives, the more difficult it is to think of destruction, and the more preposterous that idea seems when it chances to gain access to the mind. An indefinite idea of continuation is implied, it seems, in the very fact of conscious existence; for, to live is to look forward. When this implicit assumption becomes explicit, the easier way of accounting for the contradiction inflicted upon it by death is to accuse some nefarious power of having maliciously put an end to that which otherwise would have continued. But you say, man is born, grows, attains maturity, and then slowly and gradually decays until he falls lifeless; and this is true not only of man but of all animals and plants. Is not this a sufficient indication of the "naturalness" of death? Yes, we answer, sufficient it is to those who have become imbued with a scientific conception of life, not to others: the Babylonian who related to his children the story of original freedom from death was still far removed from that stage.

The myths that we have mentioned bring to light a natural aversion to a cessation of life; an aversion to be regarded as an unavoidable accompaniment of the instinct of self-preservation and as one of the

forces supporting belief in continuation after death when once that conception has taken shape.

The Influence of Death.— What influence did the prospect and the spectacle of death exercise upon the production of the idea of survival? Primitive man, as we know him, lives too much in the present to be disturbed by fear of the death-crisis, unless it be imminent, and then his fear, being little more than an instinctive recoil, does not probably lead him further.

To the semi-civilized the more profound and significant aspect of death arises either from its mystery or from the wretchedness attributed to the shades and the breaking of earthly ties. The dominant note of the Pyramid Texts is an "insistent, ever passionate protest against death." It expresses humanity's earliest supreme revolt against the great darkness and silence from which none returns.[15] For the civilized who have not found peace in a satisfying faith, it is again the mystery beyond the grave, the unanswerable query of Hamlet, which torments, not the death-crisis:

> "To die,— to sleep;
> To sleep! perchance to dream; — ay, there's the rub;
> . . . . . .
> For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
> . . . . . .
> But that the dread of something after death,
> The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
> No traveler returns, puzzles the will;

[15] J. H. Breasted: *Development of Religious Thought in Ancient Egypt:* New York; Scribner; 1912. Page 91.

And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?" [16]

The relative insignificance of the death-crisis is well shown by the indifference to it of those who cherish a faith in a satisfactory future existence. To the Christian, the Valley of the Shadow of Death is made brilliant by the light streaming from the heavenly Jerusalem. He exclaims, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" [17] Long before the advent of Christianity, there were people who went to their death rejoicing in the assurance of a land abounding in everything the heart could desire. In old Egypt, the fear of death had been conquered by those who believed in the religion of the Sun-God. Wiedemann writes of them that they dwelt much and gladly on the thought of death; it had no particular terror for them, any more than for modern Orientals. To them death was no final end but only an interruption of their existence.[18]

[16] *Hamlet,* Act III, Sc. 1.

[17] I Cor., 15: 55.

[18] Wiedemann: *Loc. cit.,* page 14.

One should remember in this connection the universal testimony of physicians that, in the words of a noted surgeon, "the process of dying is rarely painful or even unwelcome to the patient, though full of sorrow to his family. A happy unconsciousness in nearly all cases shields the dying man from pain. The weakness, the fever, the parched lips, the labored breathing are all unfelt. Most people die quietly and often almost imperceptibly . . . Even when convulsive movements occur, they are entirely independent of consciousness; merely physical in origin and character, and absolutely unattended by any suffering." In the rare cases when the death bed is attended by terror, it is due, we are told, to lurid images of a terrible hereafter. Scott who questioned sixteen very old persons, reports that 94 per cent. had no desire to live, and

But these remarks have no reference to the establishment of the belief in continuation after death, for we are not at liberty to suppose that original man was tormented by Hamlet's query, still less that in a transcendent act of creative imagination he negated the work of death by positing beyond the grave another existence. This was not within his means. No other proof that the savage's belief in continuation did not have this origin is wanted than the nature of his after-life: it is not that which it would necessarily have been, had it arisen from the desire for the satisfaction of moral cravings.

Vegetation and Insect Metamorphosis.— The idea of survival after death is sometimes supposed to have had its origin in those well known and very common facts, the growth of vegetation from seeds, and the metamorphoses of insects. The grass dies in the autumn and sprouts again in the spring, out of the nut a tree germinates; and the grub, dead though it seems, gives birth to a butterfly. To infer from these and similar facts that man continues after death would involve mental operations of a higher order than are those implied in the false perceptions which, according to the theory we have accepted, produced the belief.

Regarding insect metamorphosis, it must be said that the savage does not seem to be aware of it. Had his attention been called to it, and had he inferred human resurrection from it, at least remnants of this origin would, it seems, appear in early myths. The observation of metamorphosis does not lie so near at

that 70 per cent. longed to die.— Colin A. Scott: *Old Age and Death;* Amer. Jour. of Psy., 1896–97. VIII. Pages 67–122.

hand as might be imagined. How many of us would find out by their own unaided observations the relation of the larva to the winged insect?

The sprouting of vegetation from seeds is a fact much more easily discovered than insect metamorphosis. The savage is certainly aware of it, and interested in it. But what a step we are expecting him to take when we suppose him to think that because seeds produce new growths, corpses produce ghosts! The analogy should lead him to think rather that corpses produce new men. Dacotas and Esquimaux bury bones of dogs and seals, that from them new animals may arise; they do not expect the production of animal-ghosts.

If we could suppose that before the idea of continuation appeared, there was felt a vigorous objection to the limitation of human existence to this earth, the further supposition of an inference from the rebirth of the vegetal world would be less improbable. But this supposition may not be entertained. It is only long after the formation of the primary conception of immortality that dissatisfaction with the brevity and incompleteness of this life appeared. We should recall in this connection that at a relatively late stage of development, when men like Job felt keenly the inadequacy of this life and yearned for an extension of it, their knowledge of the grass that dies to grow green again in the spring was not sufficient to lead them to a belief in survival. Job laments that "there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again . . . through the scent of water it will bud. . . . But man dieth, and wasteth away."

The Waxing and the Waning Moon; the Rising and the Setting Sun.— Human immortality is associated in primitive myths with the moon and the sun. The waning and waxing moon, or the setting and rising sun symbolize, or are otherwise connected with, the death and the resurrection of man. But why should we see in the existence of such myths an indication that the idea of human continuation after death is derived from these phenomena? The analogy that can be drawn between the phases of the moon or the setting and rising sun and human rebirth is lame and far fetched. The probability is that only long after the appearance of the idea of human continuation was the analogy thought of.

Physical and Moral Likenesses between a Living and a Dead Person.— This is a fact not only of frequent occurrence but also obvious enough not to escape the attention of the savage. How compelling the likeness between son and father can be, every one knows. May not the idea of reincarnation, apparently universal among the Australians, and widely distributed elsewhere, have found its origin in the observation of striking likenesses?

If these likenesses were never observed except between living and dead persons, I do not see how one could escape the surmise that the belief in reincarnation owes its existence to these observations. For, in this case, the savage would not be supposed to have made a more or less far fetched inference, as from the vegetal to the human kingdom, he would merely have recognized an obvious likeness and assumed the identity of the similar persons.

But since likenesses are even more frequently observed between persons, both of whom are living, than between a dead and a living person, the bearing of likenesses upon the origin of the idea of reincarnation is not obvious. In any case, resemblances raise primarily the problem of reincarnation rather than the problem of continuation after death in ghost-land.

Reflections and Echoes.— These are sometimes mentioned as causes of the ghost-idea. To see oneself with the life-likeness of a clear reflection, or to hear one's voice repeated by a good echo, is surely enough to startle a savage. We know, as a matter of fact, that he connects reflections and echoes with ghosts. But that, before the causes we have designated had produced the belief, reflections and echoes suggested of themselves the conception and led to the belief, seems hardly probable.

The Instinct Theory of the Origin of the Belief in Continuation.— According to this antiquated theory, the idea of continuation is neither the product of a direct perception, real or illusory, nor of an inference; it is an instinct. Among the arguments commonly adduced in favor of this origin, is the alleged universality of the belief. Those who offer this argument fail to realize that there are two radically different conceptions of immortality: the primary and the modern conceptions; and that, therefore, each must be considered separately. Universality may belong to the primary belief, but we shall see that the modern belief is not and never has been

universal. The demonstration of the instinctiveness of one of these two conceptions would not involve the instinctiveness of the other. But to be universal is not synonymous with being instinctive.

To label something an instinct, is a convenient but unscientific way of disposing of a difficult question of origin. Speak the word and nothing more can be said on the subject. The present instance is an evident abuse of this delusive short cut to an explanation. For, in psychology, an instinct is understood to include a tendency to act in a particular and more or less definite and biologically useful way, when in the presence of a definite situation. The psychologist sees an absurdity in the application of the term " instinct " to a conception or a belief. One might claim, it is true, that man possesses the instinct of caring for the dead bodies of his fellowmen, and that from this instinct arose the idea of continuation after death. But even then, it would have to be admitted, that the idea of immortality would not thereby have been shown to be itself an instinct, but merely to have been suggested by an instinctive activity.

Usually, however, all that is really meant by the " instinctiveness " or the " innateness " of this belief, is that it is rooted in universal, innate desires and yearnings, and then the argument applies only to the modern belief. The aversion to annihilation; and the desire for self-completion, for the fulfillment of justice, for the continance of affection, may quite properly be designated as innate. But if no more than this be affirmed, innateness may be claimed for most beliefs with as much, or rather with as little propriety as for immortality; for most beliefs spring

directly or indirectly from innate propensities. Whether that which I have now called "propensities" be true instincts or merely vague tendencies, the conceptions and beliefs derived from them are assuredly neither instincts nor innate propensities.

A similar confusion is responsible for the application of these same terms to religion. Religion is indeed rooted in the deepest and most universal of all innate propensities: the love of life, both in its preserving and enhancing aspects. To this primary urge, the "social" instincts add their potency, and contribute each its share to the complex constructions which constitute the existing religions. But if we were to call instinctive or innate, any and every elaboration, however dependent upon intelligence, whenever it has behind it instincts or innate tendencies, what is there in the whole round of human thought and activity which would not deserve these epithets?

II. THE DIFFERENTIATION OF THE GHOST FROM THE SOUL

A conception of survival arising from memory-images, the sense of presence, dreams, and visions would necessarily picture that which survives as something like a "double" of the living. Now, some of the descriptions of anthropologists and travelers conform entirely to this requirement: the surviving individual is in size, general appearance and mode of life, similar to the departed individual. What differences there are, are those to be expected from the nature of the experiences from which the idea originated: the ghosts are of tenuous material,

usually invisible, able to transport themselves mysteriously from place to place and to pass through the smallest openings.

But, by the side of these descriptions, we find others not at all consistent with the origin we have suggested. The soul is said to be of any size, from a grain of sand up, and of any shape and appearance. It is affirmed also that a man has several souls, and that each one of them has a different destiny. There are souls that enter the womb of women; these may look like diminutive models of a man or woman, or they may be altogether different. We are driven to the supposition that the descriptions do not all refer to one and the same kind of object. Some of them have obvious reference to persons as they are seen in dreams and visions, others cannot by any stretch of imagination be derived from experiences of that kind; they seem rather to denote a belief in a life-potency animating living beings. Let us then, instead of using interchangeably, according to the custom, the words "soul" and "ghost," use them discriminatingly. Let "ghost" or "double" refer to the conception which represents the departed as similar in appearance and habits to the living. "Soul" would then designate the (individualized?) life-power possessed by every object that, in the eye of the savage, is animated.

Whence did the savage derive the idea of soul, of a life-potency? From the seeds with which he is familiar; from partly developed plants and animals? Yes; most probably. But there is no reason to think that his imagination was narrowly limited by these objects. He had, as a matter of fact, no direct knowl-

edge of the human germ of life, and was presumably therefore freely influenced by many facts in his experience which suggested to him something as to the appearance and properties of that potency. Thus, there need be no surprise if the soul is described as of the size of a grain of sand or much bigger; or as in the shape of man; or as soft like flesh, or hard like bone and certain seeds. Neither need we wonder if each person is said to possess several souls, each one perhaps dwelling in a particular organ; for, in that case, we may suppose that the savage has individualized the "powers" expressed in particular mental and moral traits (vigor, courage, cleverness) or in physiological functions (breathing, the heart's action, reproduction). And if this supposition does not do sufficient justice to the facts, there are others that might. Our present knowledge is too imperfect for us to dogmatize on this point.

When this discrimination between ghost and soul is made, much that is otherwise absolutely unintelligible in the statements attributed to the savage, becomes readily explicable. We understand, for instance, that when he speaks of a something located in the liver, without which the person would die, he means the life-potency, the soul, and not the ghost. And when he speaks of that which has survived death as living on an island not so far away but that you can sometimes at night hear voices wafted over the sea, he means ghosts and not souls. It seems probable also, that in the instance of so-called duality of "souls," quoted in the preceding chapter, the kra, which exists before the birth of the man to whom

it belongs, is the soul; and the srahman, that begins its career only at death, is the ghost.

The failure of anthropologists to realize that the words " ghost " and " soul," used by them indiscriminately, designate two different conceptions, is due in great part to language difficulties. Confusion is also fostered by the fact that, if our understanding is correct, it is most probable that ghosts also have souls, in the same sense as earthly bodies have souls. The kra, existing before the person, is said to continue after death together with the srahman. This would be expected if the kra (in our understanding, the soul of the earthly body) continues as the soul of the ghost. A third source of confusion is that the savage himself is, we may well suppose, not able to always keep separate these two conceptions. It is to be expected that the surviving ghost would be at times confused with the germ producing birth.

When we are told that certain savages affirm the soullessness of women and their annihilation at death, are we to understand that women are not produced by life-germs, that they have no soul, or that, in their case, at the death of the body the germ of life also dies? In the latter event, we should speak not of the soullessness, but of the ghostlessness of women.

If the savage makes but few, if any reference to the soul of ghosts, it may be merely because there is no occasion for his doing so. It is not his habit to concern himself with things that have no practical significance for him. He may, however, never have realized that consistency requires ghosts to have souls. On the other hand, should he regard the life-potency as passing at death into the soul, there could

be no reincarnation into new earthly bodies, unless ghosts died, or unless the earthly body had several souls, one of which belonged to the ghost, and another served the purpose of reincarnation. In this circle of ideas, we may for the present do no better than speculate.

III. THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL AS SET FORTH BY DURKHEIM IN HIS THEORY OF THE ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF THE SOUL-GHOST

The problem of the origin of the soul conception, does not strictly speaking belong to our immediate purpose; it is the origin of the ghost, not of the soul, that we have to explain. In a chapter on the origin of the idea of impersonal powers of a preceding book, I have set forth what may be called the more distant source of the soul idea. In his *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Durkheim offers a valuable suggestion regarding the immediate origin of that conception. For this distinguished author, as for other anthropologists, soul and ghost are not two radically different conceptions arising in different ways. On the contrary, the main point of his theory is that the immortality of the individual person is a necessary consequence of the nature attributed to the soul. The main question is, therefore, for him, that of the origin of the soul-ghost and of its nature. That problem intimately connects itself in his mind with the far reaching question of totemism. I cannot attempt to appreciate here the importance of the contribution made by Durkheim to the solution of this great and knotty problem; I shall have to limit myself to a summary exposition of that part

of his theory which is of direct interest to us in the present connection.[19]

The Central Australian does not think that at birth a new person is created; creation *de novo* he does not understand. For him every person coming into existence is a reincarnation. Each clan consists thus of a constant number of beings; or, if the membership increases, each individual proceeds nevertheless from the uncreated, original ancestors of the clan. In the latter case, new beings bud forth, as it were, out of the substance of the uncreated ancestors, find lodgment in women's bodies, and come to birth in due course of time.

The close connection existing between the original ancestors and the totemic principle is an essential part of Durkheim's theory. They were not men, in the proper sense of the term; they were partly animals or plants, and partly men, "made of the same substance as the totemic principle." Thus Durkheim finds the origin of each new born individual in the totemic power itself, acting through the intermediary of the ancestors. When the totemic potency animates a human or animal body, it becomes individualized; until then, it may be considered as too vaguely conceived to deserve the epithet personal; it is not very different from the *mana* of the Melanesians.

Durkheim thinks himself justified in regarding these ideas — they are found throughout Australia, in America, and probably elsewhere — as expressing the primary conception of the soul-ghost.

[19] Durkheim: *Les Formes Elémentaires de la Vie Religieuse:* Paris; Alcan; 1912. Pages 352–375.

From this understanding of the nature and the origin of the soul-ghost, Durkheim derives the conception of its survival after the death of the body. Since it appears to the savage that souls can be made only out of souls, "the new born souls can be nothing else than new forms of already existing souls; therefore, these must continue to exist in order that others may later be formed. Only by belief in the immortality of the soul can primitive man explain to himself a fact which cannot fail to strike his attention: the perpetuation of the life of his social group. Individuals die, but the clan survives." [20]

Many years will no doubt elapse before anything like unanimity is reached with regard to the merits of this theory, when regarded as representing the primitive account of the origin of human individuals. But this at least may be said now: after a long and practically unchallenged sway, animism, considered as the primitive philosophy of life, is now not only challenged but finds itself confronted by a formidable rival. In several of its aspects, notably in the relations it would establish with totemism and with the general conception of impersonal power (a notion which I think must have preceded that of personal agents), the new theory seems more profoundly rooted than the old.

The criticism we would pass upon this theory is, we trust, already understood. The substantial identity which Durkheim supposes between the life-potency and the ghost arises from a misunderstanding. The ghost with whom the savage maintains more or less systematic relations of the kind obtain-

[20] *Loc. cit.*, page 384.

ing between man and man, is something radically different from the soul which, according to Durkheim,— and in this we are ready to follow him — is responsible for new births. We have already drawn attention to some of the facts which contradict the common assumption. Durkheim himself knows these facts, but he does not ascribe to them the significance which they bear. When discussing Strehlow's [21] account of the incarnation of souls, he mentions and accepts the report according to which, among the Arunta (a tribe of Central Australians), the ghosts at death do not reincarnate themselves; but, after the funerary rites have been completed, go to the island of the dead. From that dwelling place they make several journeys to the living, in order to assist their families. These ghosts, however, are not immortal; they are ultimately destroyed by bolts from the sky during thunder storms. Nevertheless, these tribes, again according to Strehlow, explain birth as a reincarnation. It is therefore evident that that which is reincarnated — supposing the term to be properly used in this connection — cannot be the ghosts who go to the island of the dead and are finally destroyed. That which is reincarnated might, however, be the soul of the earthly body, when, after becoming the soul of the ghost, it has finally been liberated at its death. But this supposition is, as far as I know, not entertained by the French sociologist, and it does not seem indicated by the facts.

The Aruntas' own account of birth does not seem to fit Durkheim's theory any better. Wherever an Alcheringa (one of the uncreated ancestors) has dis-

[21] *Loc. cit.*, page 357 ff.

appeared into the ground, *ratapa* lurk at the surface, in holes, or in trees; and, when chance offers, they enter women's bodies. They say also that, in other instances, the ancestor himself operates. At the proper time, he comes out of his hiding place under ground, and throws to a passing woman a *namatuna* (or *namatwinna*) which enters her body and assumes human shape. The ghost inhabitants of the country of the dead are obviously not identical with these *ratapa* and *namatuna*.

Instead of supposing that the ghost-idea is intimately connected with the birth-idea, it seems better in accord with the known facts to hold that the problems of birth and of death presented themselves to the savage as two independent problems. The former, he solved naturally enough by thinking of the entrance into women of a seed of life proceeding from one of the ancestors, and conceived usually as bearing human semblance.

The problem of the hereafter was, correctly speaking, in my opinion, not a problem at all to the savage. He may very well have asked himself whence the new life suddenly felt by the pregnant woman, and have given the answer suggested to him by vegetation: a seed from an old stock had found its way into a woman's body. But why should he, after seeing plants, animals, and men grow, reach maturity, bear fruit, slowly decay, until little remained of the life that was in them, and finally become inert in death; why should he, possessed of this knowledge, have asked himself what became of the extinguished life? Raising the problem of a hereafter implies probably a much higher development than the one possessed

by primitive man. And yet, it seems as if the savage had given a solution to that problem. As a matter of fact, if our understanding of the origin of the ghost-idea is correct, the savage did not answer the problem of death, he merely, as he thought, *perceived* the survival after death. It is that illusory perception of surviving beings which itself, later on, set the problem of human destiny.[22]

[22] When gods are derived from surviving human souls, Durkheim objects that the distinctive characteristic of divinities, namely their sacredness, has not been accounted for (see *loc. cit.*, pp. 85–91, 123–124, 265–266, 375–379). He reminds us that man, as he appears in dreams, is no more than human; between human souls and gods there lies therefore the chasm made by the latter's possession of sacredness. If, when living in a human body, the soul is merely an ordinary, a secular thing; how could it at death become suddenly an object of religious regard. To derive gods from ghosts is in Durkheim's opinion to suppose a creation *ex nihilo*. It is not sufficient that the soul in order to become sacred be a source of anxiety. Religion, it is true, includes some fear; but "it is a fear *sui generis*, compounded of respect more than of dread, and in which dominates the very particular emotion inspired in man by majesty. The idea of majesty is essentially a religious idea. . . . Disincarnation cannot invest human souls with that attribute."

This criticism does not affect the origin of the belief in human continuation here defended; but that other part of Tylorian Animism which derives divinities, and therefore religion, from ghosts. For my own part, I hold it probable that gods have arisen not only from ancestors, but also from other sources, as, for instance, from the personification of natural phenomena and from the assignment of a creator, or creators, to the universe or any part of it (see *A Psychological Study of Religion*, Chapters V and VI).

The sacredness of ghosts — when they are sacred — is undoubtedly, as Durkheim claims, a characteristic added to that possessed by the *ordinary* human soul in the earthly body; and, in order to account fully for all the elements that go to make up religious life, one must assuredly not omit sacred-

We are, it seems, in possession of two probable theories, *each accounting for a different set of observations:* the one derives births from ancestors, themselves bearers of the wonderful and sacred potency which is the efficient agent of totemism; the other, accounts for the belief in the survival after death of ghosts that partake in most respects of the nature of the living, and are shaped in their semblance.

If the view here defended should be correct, the rôle played in the course of human development by exteriorized memory-images, dreams, and visions, would be stupendous.

Ernest Crawley's Theory of the Origin of the Conception of the Soul-Ghost.— Crawley attacks the dream-theory of the origin of the soul-ghost idea, and offers a substitute for it. An outline of this puzzling theory follows.

Perception gave man the real objects, the things; memory and thought gave him "the soul of the things." "When primitive man first saw an object in memory, he saw the soul for the first time." For this author, the idea of the thing *is* the "primal form" of the soul-ghost idea. Thus understood, the soul is not at first exteriorized. "The essence of it, is that it is mental, actually felt in the brain, never confused with the reality in normal consciousness." "Thus the soul is neither a phantom or skeleton outline, nor a second self or 'double.'" These are "two extremes of which the soul is the mean." This soul is not an illusion, not mistaken for the reality. (Pages 75–78.) "In other words, primitive or early theories of the soul are merely

ness. But neither should one overlook the personal beings that, when invested with this attribute, constitute divinities.

early modes of describing the ordinary operations of the mind." (Page 189.)

The ghost-idea appears, under the influence of death, as a modification of the soul-idea. The memory-image of the living person is altered by the sight and the thought of the dead, and thus the ghost-idea is produced. (Page 190.)[23]

Feuerbach's Conception of the Origin of Survival after Death.— This early explanation of the origin of ghost, and with it of continuation after death, rests upon a very crude psychology. For Feuerbach, the idea of survival is merely the idea of the living, as it remains after his death, in the memory of those who knew him. (Page 273.) "Der Mensch mit seiner leiblichen Existenz nicht auch seine Existenz im Geiste, in der Erinnerung, im Gemüthe verliert." Die Leiche des Menschen noch für dem Menschen selbst halten, zugleich aber auch, weil sie noch das Bild des Lebendigen in der Erinnerung haben, dieses von der Leiche unterscheiden, und als ein selbsständiges Wesen personificiren." (Pages 264, 267.)[24]

[23] *The Idea of the Soul:* London; A. and C. Black; 1909.

[24] Ludwig Feuerbach: *Gedanken über Todt und Unsterblichkeit;* Werke: Leipzig; 1847. Vol. III, pages 261–273.

CHAPTER III

THE PRIMARY BELIEF IN CONTINUATION AFTER DEATH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE HISTORICAL PERIOD

I. THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY IS SAID TO HAVE APPEARED LATE

After what we have learned concerning the universal existence of the primary belief among contemporary savages, the statement frequently made that at the beginning of the historical period several peoples, notably the Hebrews and the Greeks, did not believe in human immortality, may cause some surprise. We are told, for instance, that the Israelites' belief in immortality cannot be traced much further back than the beginning of the Christian era. The covenant Yahweh made with his people does not allude to a future life. The nation alone was an object of his care. The great prophets themselves, when they inveigh against sin, care only for the danger therefrom to the existence of the nation. Among the Greeks also the belief in immortality is said to have appeared late. Pythagoras, the Mysteries, and Plato are named as marking the rise of the faith. The great contribution of Dionysos to the religion of Greece was, we are told, the hope of immortality. We also learn that, "If one had spoken to a Roman in the fourth century before

Christ, concerning his soul, its sinfulness, and its need of salvation, there would have been no discussion possible, for the person addressed would not have understood what it was all about. It is very difficult for us to put ourselves in such a position of innocence; but we can at least realize that there are certain oriental nations of the present day who do not understand these concepts, *who have not the consciousness of an individual soul* and hence can neither feel its guilt nor desire its salvation. *The origin of this idea of the personal soul is obscured in great mystery. It was not present at the time of the Punic Wars.* We see only scanty traces of it in the literature of the Ciceronian age." [1]

These affirmations may be justified in two ways: either the continuation idea expressed in the universal belief in ghosts had, at the beginning of the historical period, disappeared from among the peoples mentioned; or the immortality which the historians of these nations have in mind is so different from the primary survival that they do not at all take that belief into account. We shall have no difficulty in showing that the popular belief in ghosts, and at least the remnants of a cult addressed to surviving spirits, persisted in the nations mentioned until the appearance of the modern belief and even later on. The second hypothesis is therefore the valid one.

In the Old Testament, traces of polydæmonistic belief are definite enough to preclude divergence of opinion.

[1] J. B. Carter: *The Religious Life of Ancient Rome:* Houghton, Mifflin Company; 1911. Page 72. The italics are mine.

The sacred stone at Bethel, the name itself meaning "a house of God" (Gen. 28:22); the oracular tree at Sichem (Gen. 12:6; Deut. 11:3); the teraphims, which even as late as the 8th century B. C. were a regular part of the Hebrew household (Hosea 3:4), constitute incontrovertible evidence of the survival among the ancient Hebrews of the primary belief in continuation after death. "It may be set down," says Budde, "as extremely probable that the Teraphim belong to the extensive domain of ancestor-worship, or worship of the dead, which, in many lands and continents, even in the New World, has formed the oldest verifiable foundation of religion. Besides the household gods, Israel must have had cults of this nature which embraced wider circles, the family, the clan, and the tribe, though only isolated and unconnected traces of these cults remain in the Old Testament. In I Samuel 20:6, David speaks of his family's yearly sacrifice in Bethlehem. It may be assumed, indeed, that the sacrifice on that occasion was offered to Yahweh and not to a deified eponymous hero. But in ancient times the case was certainly otherwise. We find great stress laid upon the mention of the burial-places of a whole line of ancestors and heads of clans. (Gen. 35; Gen. 1; Joshua 24; Judges 2.) Of the so-called 'minor judges' we learn scarcely anything more than their places of burial (Judges 10:2, 5; 12:10, 12, 15). We may be sure that religious rites were performed at these graves in ancient times."[2] In Deut. 25:14, we read, "I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I put away thereof, being unclean, *nor given thereof for the dead.*"

Beer has shown that the old Jewish mourning customs originated with the desire for protection from the liber-

[2] Karl Budde: *Religion of Israel to the Exile:* Putnam's Sons; 1899. Pages 64, 65.

ated spirit of the deceased. " The loud cries uttered by the mourners frighten away the spirits. The dress, the covering of the head with ashes, the shaving of the hair, the disfigurement and mutilation of the body aim at making the mourners unrecognizable. . . . The wrapping of the head or beard prevents the spirit from entering in them, in the manner of infection bacilli, through the nose or the mouth. Hence the custom still prevalent to-day of the mourning veil." [3]

The evidence is just as clear in the case of the Greeks as of the Jews. The Homeric conception of man is of a dual personality composed of a visible, earthly being and of its shadow or copy, which manifests its presence in dreams and continues to live in Hades after the severance of death. This " double " takes no part in the life of the earthly being; its domain is the dream world. For Homer, dreams are never empty imaginations. But the personages of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* do not offer any cult to the dead, who are quite inaccessible to them. In an earlier age, however, the Greeks worshiped the departed. The books of Homer themselves contain remnants of this older faith.[4] More substantial evidence is now at hand in the form of recently discovered sepultures with remains of burnt sacrifices offered in behalf of the dead on the spot where the body was interred. In the graves were placed provisions, gold, and ornaments, in the belief that the dead would be able to make use of them.

Jane Harrison has conclusively demonstrated that while the religion of the Olympic gods was in process of formation, and even much later, the Greeks practiced rites clearly indicative of the belief in human ghosts.

[3] Georg Beer: *Der Biblische Hades. Theol. Abhand.— Eine Festgabe für* H. J. Holtzmann; 1902. Pages 16, 17.

[4] Rohde has indicated in *Psyche*, vol. I, pages 14–32, the most interesting of these remnants.

She finds that important festivals, nominally celebrated in honor of various Olympians (the Diasia, the Thargelia, the Anthesteria) were in reality chiefly "rites of a gloomy underworld character, connected mainly with purification and the worship of ghosts." [5] The Anthesteria, for instance, celebrated nominally in honor of Dionysos, "was a festival of ghosts" aiming at riddance from them. There is no doubt that the Keres with which the festival is mainly concerned were ghosts, and that in the 5th century, B. C., they were thought of as little winged sprites. Countless vase paintings show them fluttering about graves. One vase, reproduced in Miss Harrison's work, pictures Hermes Psychopompos with the magic staff in his hand evoking the winged Keres that are seen flying upward out of a grave-jar.[6] The outcome of her investigation is that "the Greeks of the classical period recognized two different classes of rites, one of the nature of 'service' addressed to the Olympians, the other of the nature of 'riddance' or 'aversion' addressed to an order of beings wholly alien."

The idea of *manes,* essential to the religion of the old Romans, is a "vague conception of shades of the dead dwelling below the earth." [7] If one is to believe Lucretius, and there seems to be no reason why he should not be credited in this particular, the Romans were haunted by a dread of the judgment to come. Andrew Lang is of the opinion that *De Rerum Natura* was written against religion in order to free men's minds from the dread of future punishment and generally from the interference of gods; he refers to descriptions by Pau-

[5] Jane Harrison: *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion;* 1st ed.; page 11.

[6] *Ibid.:* pages 43, 44, 76, 165–167.

[7] W. Ward Fowler: *The Religious Experience of the Roman People:* Macmillan and Company; 1911. Page 386.

sanias and others of Roman wall-paintings picturing the torments endured by the wicked.[8]

The presence at the beginning of the historical period of practices indicative of a belief in survival, in the very people among whom the idea of immortality is said to have appeared late, is no longer a moot point. It is equally clear that at the opening of the historical period the belief in ghosts and the cults addressed to them were losing favor in all the nations bordering the eastern end of the Mediterranean. The leaders of the time called the old belief a superstition. In Palestine, in Greece, and in Rome, the cults addressed to ghosts were deprecated as evil. In Israel, the religion of Yahweh was the determined enemy of the cult of the dead in all its forms. Long before Jesus appeared, the stage of exorcism and divination was past; "Neither magic nor sorcery have any longer any standing in the official religion of Israel. . . . The spirits of the dead, too, have lost their power; exorcism of the dead and inquiry of the dead, as well as all the mourning customs which remind one of the old cultus and sacrifices to the dead, are forbidden, as opposed to the spirit of the Israelitish religion. Finally, Sheol had no significance in the religion of the prophets."[9] "That which was in the sixth and even in the fifth century before the Christian era," ac-

[8] Andrew Lang: *Letters on Literature:* London; 1892. Page 91.

Transmigration through the impregnation of women by spirits was apparently credited by the Romans of Virgil's time.

[9] Karl Marti: *The Religion of the Old Testament:* Putnam's Sons; 1907. Page 180.

cording to Jane Harrison, " The real religion of the main bulk of the [Hellenic] people, a religion not of cheerful tendance but of fear and deprecation," was the same that Plutarch centuries later, and with him most of his great contemporaries, regarded as superstition. Among the Romans, ghosts had so far lost individuality as to be regarded by modern historians as impersonal forces. The cult had become to an amazing degree a matter of mere conventional behavior.[10] Thus a period of greatly decreased influence, among the people, of the primary belief in immortality and of definite antagonism to it by the leaders preceded the establishment of the new belief.

II. THE CHIEF CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRIMARY BELIEF AT THE BEGINNING OF THE HISTORICAL PERIOD, IN THE COUNTRIES BORDERING THE EASTERN END OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

A good and sufficient reason for disregarding the primary belief, when tracing the origin of the modern belief in immortality, is the essential disparity of the two. We have already seen what are the chief characteristics of the other life among present day savages; before turning to the modern conception, we must ascertain what the primary belief became among the ancient populations with whom the modern conception originated, i. e., the peoples to whom we owe our civilization, the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Hebrews, and Greeks.

The after life of the savage was not altogether a

[10] W. Ward Fowler: *Loc. cit.;* pages 386–388.

wretched existence; ghosts were no less vigorous and effective than the living, and many tribes entertained the idea of a paradise for all or, at least, for some souls. That cheering belief is not to be found, during the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, among the peoples just mentioned. There is no relieving touch to the somber colors with which they paint the fate of ghosts; and, as one approaches the Christian era, a hopeless desire to escape from it is more and more frequently observed.

The Egyptian religion is often called "the religion of eternal life"; nowhere else did the idea of continuation after death play so important a rôle. The oldest historical documents we possess, the inscriptions in the passages and chambers of the great pyramids, called the Pyramid texts, belong to an already complex civilization although they date back to about 3400 B. C., the time of the first dynasties and of the great pyramids. The glimpses of earlier belief given in these texts suffice, however, to indicate the presence of a religion of the underworld according to which the dead continued an unhappy existence under the earth. "The prehistoric Osiris faith," writes Breasted, "involved a forbidding hereafter which was dreaded." Later on, the religion of the Sun-god supplanted among the ruling classes that of the Nether-god. The old religion, modified in many ways by the new, continued among the people; but the fate of the dead was not improved. We read that the souls "join the Sun-god on his journey from the western horizon, and are left by the god in different parts of the underworld, where he gives them fields to till on which they must hence-

forth live as vassals, always ready to help their lord against his foes if any should threaten to attack him on his passage. Theirs was no joyful lot. With delight they hailed the Sun-god on his appearance; but at the end of an hour he vanished, the door of their room closed after him, and for the next twenty-three hours they had to wait in a darkness which was relieved only by the light which came from fire-breathing serpents, or from the sea of flame in which the captive foes of the Sun-god were burning. It is noticeable that the same fate overtakes high and low, kings and subjects. Few indeed are the mortals who succeed in escaping it, and those who do are not such as have lived good lives on earth; they are those who have acquired an exceptionally large knowledge of magic, and who have striven also never to show themselves enemies of the Sun-god. These succeeded in constraining him not to set them down on his course, but to bear them along in his train, ever circling round the heavens in the solar bark." [11]

The same melancholy conception of existence after death is to be noted in exhortations on the enjoyment of life, such as the following inscription on a stela addressed by a dead wife to her husband: [11] "Oh, my comrade, my husband. Cease not to eat and drink, to be drunken, to enjoy the love of women, to hold festivals. Follow thy longing by day and night. Give care no room in thy heart. For the West Land (a domain of the dead) is a land of sleep

[11] A. Wiedemann: *The Realm of the Egyptian Dead:* London; Nutt; 1902. Pages 25, 26, 27, 28. Concerning the fear of ghosts in Egypt, see pages 37, 38.

and darkness, a dwelling place wherein those who are there remain."

In the religion of the God of the Sky, the religion of the nobles at the time of the composition of the Pyramid texts, the fate of the individual was thought to be happy only if the dead himself before his demise, or some one for him afterwards, were able to make it so. The Egyptian never wholly dissociated a person from his body, and could not conceive of the continuation of life after death if the body were not in some way preserved; hence embalming customs and the supreme effort, represented by the great pyramids, to shelter the bodies of the kings. But it was not enough to preserve and shield the body for all time; it must be kept provided with food and whatever else the departed might need; furniture, weapons, statuettes, servants intended for the performance of their menial functions, books, and even musical instruments. As the deceased was thought to be at the mercy of the living, those who were able provided inalienable funds for the everlasting provisioning of their tombs.

Even so protected and provided, possible dangers still threatened. "Whichever way the royal pilgrim faced as he looked out across the eastern sea, he was beset with apprehension of the possible hostility of the gods, and there crowded in upon him a thousand fancies of danger and opposition which clouded the fair picture of blessedness beyond. There is an epic touch in the dauntless courage with which the solitary king, raising himself like some elemental colossus, . . . wielding his magical power, makes himself sovereign of the universe and will stop

the very rising of the sun if he is halted at the gate of the Sun-god's realm." [12]

To embalming and the provisions made for the material wants of the dead, the Egyptians added magical incantations and prayers. We read in the Pyramid texts over and over the affirmation of the will-to-believe denying death in quasi magical formulæ, "King Teti has not died the death, he has become a glorious one in the horizon"; "Ho! King Unis! Thou didst not depart dead, thou didst depart living"; "This King Pepi dies not"; "Have you said that he would die? He dies not; this King Pepi lives forever." [13]

As long as the Egyptian nobles enjoyed in death the care that was thought effective, their survivors could look upon death with something like composure. But when the pyramids threatened ruin, the priests had given up their sacred task of care takers, and the legacies for their maintenance had vanished, what hope could remain to those who had trusted in these external means? These happenings together with others led, during the Middle Kingdom (2160–1788 B. C.), to a much less hopeful view of the other life on the part of the followers of the Sky-god. They were reduced to the sorrowful outlook of the common people.

> "Behold the places thereof [of the Pyramids]
> Their walls are dismantled,
> Their places are no more,
> As if they had never been.

[12] Breasted: *The Development of Religious Thought in Ancient Egypt.* Pages 116, 117.

[13] Breasted: *Loc. cit.;* page 91.

"None cometh from thence
That he may tell us how they fare;
That he may tell us of their fortunes,
That he may content our heart,
Until we too depart
To the place whither they have gone.
Encourage thy heart to forget it,
Making it pleasant for thee to follow thy desire,
While thou livest.

. . . . . .

"Celebrate the glad day,
Be not weary therein.
Lo, no man taketh his goods with him.
Yea, none returneth again that is gone." [14]

From the naïve belief in continuation after death of the present day savage to the pessimism of this song, there stretches a long history. After a period during which, with admirable boldness, the Egyptian nobles had presumed to make themselves the equal of the gods in the other life, they had been forced back to the disheartening belief of the common people. A similar belief ruled in the neighboring countries.

The Babylonian dead were supposed to dwell in a great cave underneath the earth, the most common name of which is Aralu. It "was pictured as a vast place, dark and gloomy. . . , surrounded by seven walls and strongly guarded, it was a place to which no living person could go and from which no mortal could ever depart after once entering it." [15]

[14] A song of the Eleventh Dynasty (about 2000 B. C.,) edited by W. M. Müller in *Liebespoesie.* I use the English translation in Breasted: *Loc. cit.,* page 183.

[15] Morris Jastrow: *Aspects of Religious Belief and Practice in Babylonia and Assyria;* 1911. Pages 353, 356, 358.

"The day of death is a day of sorrow, 'the day without mercy.' . . . Whenever death is referred to in the literature, it is described as an unmitigated evil. What distinguishes the dead from the living is their inactivity." They "are weak, and, therefore, unless others attend to their needs, they suffer pangs of hunger, or must content themselves with 'dust and clay' as their food." [15] Their inactivity carries with it a deprivation of all pleasures. But the dead person, not sufficiently well cared for by his relatives, could avenge himself by plaguing them. An instance of how this was done among the Hebrews is provided in the Old Testament's description of Saul's procedure when he sought out a sorceress and through her summoned the dead Samuel.

For the Babylonians, death made all men equal. There were no distinctions of rank in the underworld, kings, priests, conjurers, magicians, and common people all found themselves together in the dry and dusty *kurnugea* (Sumerian word for abode of the dead). Everything one touched was dusty. Dust and earth were the food, the muddy water the drink of those living the shadowy life of the underworld.[16]

Sheol of the Hebrews, like the underworld of the Babylonians, was a place of dread. The shades were forgotten of God. Yahweh was the God of the

[16] Friedrich Delitzsch: *Das Land ohne Heimkehr, die Gedanken der Babylonier-Assyrer über Tod und Jenseits;* Stuttgart; 1911. Page 16. He thinks, however, that as early as the 30th century B. C. a distinction in the abode of the shades made its appearance. Some of the shades live in peace and comfort in a country provided with water. (Pages 18–22.)

living, not of the dead.[17] "Go thy way," says Ecclesiastes, "eat thy bread with joy and drink thy wine with a merry heart;. . . Let thy garments be always white; and let not thy head lack oil. Live joyfully with the wife thou lovest all the days of thy life of vanity: . . . for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol whither thou goest."[18]

In Greece the land of the dead was also below the earth, beyond Akaron. The souls went to Hades bemoaning their lot, for it was wretched. From that dark country souls never returned, and with them there was no communication. Neither the Egyptians, nor the Babylonians, nor the Hebrews, nor the Greeks could think of beings deprived of a vigorous, effective body as enjoying a happy life; that is why the Egyptians did their utmost to preserve the body, and why the souls were pictured as feeble, inefficient shades. The Babylonian dead were supposed to live an ineffective, drowsy, starved existence; and the inhabitants of Sheol are described in the Old Testament as *rephaim*, that is, feeble and ineffective creatures. Homer draws a repulsive picture of the dead hovering in the dark realm of Akaron, hazily conscious, hollow voiced, weak, and indifferent. The few fortunate individuals who were translated to Elysium or elsewhere without passing through death and lived on happily, had retained their body.

The ghosts known to the Old Testament writers "were entirely lacking in the characteristics of per-

[17] Psalm 88:13. [18] Ecclesiastes 9:7-10.

sonality," [19] and the Roman shades were "hardly, if at all, individualized." [20] This lack of definite personality and the accompanying lack of individual names are hardly matters for surprise; they follow unavoidably, it seems to me, from the immense number of shades which made it impossible for the living to think of them otherwise than collectively. A deceased husband is, of course, a perfectly definite person to his wife at the beginning of her widowhood; but as time passes, and as the rites of propitiation are more and more carelessly attended to, and a new husband replaces the departed one, the personality of the ghostly first husband unavoidably fades out. Sooner or later, he is degraded to the rank of the undifferentiated shades that haunt the world of the dead — shades thought of and dealt with not individually, but collectively. Such were the numena, whose varied powers were collective rather than individual.

The vagueness with which the personality of the shades was conceived should not, however, be interpreted as signifying that they were powers of an impersonal order. The ghosts, the shades, the numena with whom the Greeks, the Hebrews, the Romans maintained relations, were personal powers, however ill characterized they may have been. This fact is established by the nature of the relations maintained with them: the invocations, the offerings, the sacrifices. Such rites are not addressed to non-personal powers. Of the numberless ghosts existing for these peoples, only those who for any reason be-

[19] Karl Marti: *Loc. cit.;* page 58.
[20] W. Ward Fowler: *Loc. cit.;* page 386.

came centers of special attention on the part of a group, preserved or reacquired a definite personality and received a name. Their humble descent from the crowd of nameless souls was, of course, either never known or speedily forgotten.

The kind of influence exercised by the belief in continuation varies with the degree of mental development of the believer as well as with the nature of the belief. In the modern belief the whole emphasis is placed upon securing *for oneself* a happy life after death. It is otherwise with the savage. He lives in the present and gives little thought to his own destiny; he is much more interested in the existence of the ghosts themselves, and in their behavior towards him, than in his own survival. The next world exists for him only in its influence upon the present life: he believes in the survival of others, and does not think of his own. Among the semi-civilized, however, the belief leads both to rites for averting the dreaded ghosts and to a real concern for one's own future.

For centuries the primary belief, with all the hopelessness and horror it took on in the course of its development, oppressed the millions among whom European civilization was slowly taking shape. Why did the primary belief harden into this distressing and hopeless form? Surely not because all optimism had departed from human nature. The impulses out of which paradises are created were not dead; this is triumphantly demonstrated by the creation, a little later on, of the glorious modern conception. The explanation of the temporary triumph

of the dismal belief in impotent and vacuous souls seems to be found, as I have already intimated, in the inability of men at that stage of culture to conceive of a person as enjoying a tolerable existence when deprived of his earthly body.

The persistence of the difficulty offered by the destruction of the body is sufficiently evidenced by the fact that its resurrection is affirmed in the modern conception of immortality. Not belief in bodiless spirits, but in spirits inhabiting " glorified " bodies, is the form which faith took under the pressure of the moral demands for immortality.[21]

I have reported certain conceptions and beliefs of the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Hebrews, and the Greeks as if they had arisen independently of one another. This is certainly not the fact: the ancient Hebrews' belief in continuation after death, for instance, owed much to the Babylonians. My purpose was not to trace the influence of peoples upon each other, but rather to find the reasons for those characteristics of the idea of continuation after death which are common to a group of them.

[21] As recently as 1875, a Dr. Schneider expressed the opinion that burning the body makes life eternal impossible. " Only if the dead are sunk in the grave is there any hope present for the mourners that they will remain preserved for life eternal and that we shall again find them. Of this comfort, however, those who remain behind are robbed if the body is taken from them and burned."— From an address, " To Bury, not to Burn," as quoted by Alfred Bertholet in *Pre-Christian Belief in the Resurrection, Amer. Jr. of Theol.,* vol. XX; 1906; page 19.

All the Christian creeds affirm the resurrection of the body.

CHAPTER IV

THE ORIGIN OF THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF IMMORTALITY

In the countries bordering the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, general conditions required for the birth of a new conception of immortality were realized at the beginning of the historical period. Earthly existence had come to be felt as too brief and at best too imperfect to account for the significance of man. The consciousness of the insufficiency of this life to satisfy the cravings of the heart and the demands of conscience manifests itself in many ways in early historical records. And, whether the intellectual leaders were prepared or not to entertain another than the traditional explanation of dreams and visions, they looked with disfavor upon the most obvious of the practical consequences of the belief in ghost. Under these circumstances, their influence could not fail to be placed on the side of any other plausible belief, practically valuable.

One might establish an interesting parallel, historical as well as psychological, between the appearance of romantic, platonic love and that of the new immortality. Just as love poetry cannot be expected until sex relations have surpassed mere physiological needs, so the creation of the modern paradise cannot take place before ideals of friend-

ship and of love have been formed. The period of the birth of love-poetry, and more generally of lyric poetry, was also that of the appearance of the new belief in immortality, for these two expressions of human needs are witnesses to similar spiritual experiences. The raptures and pains which under certain circumstances vent themselves in lyric song, under others seek relief in the thought of an eternal existence in which love, friendship, and justice shall be forever victorious.

Cicero, who lived during what may be called the interregnum of the belief in continuation, provides a precious illustration of the influence of affection upon the establishment of the new belief. Agnosticism was his usual attitude. In one of his letters he seems to speak of his own non-existence after death. Nevertheless, when his beloved and only daughter, Tullia, died, he thought of her as still surviving, as a deity or spirit to whom a *fanum* [1] could be erected. In a *Consolatio* addressed to himself he insists upon the spiritual nature of the soul. "And in the concluding words he hints strongly at the *divinity* of the soul which is of the same make as God Himself,— of the same immaterial nature as the only Deity of whom we mortals can conceive. His daughter, therefore, is not only still living in a spiritual life, but she is in some vague sense divine. . . . Undoubtedly, Cicero is here under the influence of the Pythagoreans as well as of his own emotion." [2] Instances of belief in immortality due

[1] *Fanum* was the general term for a spot of ground sacred to a deity.

[2] The whole of this passage referring to Cicero is taken more

to a cause similar to the one affecting Cicero are abundant among us to-day. Cicero deserves special mention in this connection only because he lived before the belief was firmly established.

Some of the psychic forces that were to create the belief in the fulfillment of human desires after death, began by giving rise to heralds of the new faith, namely to beliefs in translation into an endless existence without passing through death and in Messianic prophecy.

I. TRANSLATION TO A LAND OF IMMORTALITY

In the Homeric epics, Menelaus and Ganymede are translated, the first to Elysium, the second to Olympus; not, it is true, as a reward for faithfulness to the gods, nor because of superior personal worth, but simply, at least so it appears, because of a physical relationship to the gods. There is here no question of a special abode for chosen spirits, on the order of the Christian heaven. Neither Menelaus nor Ganymede were shades; they did not die, they never lost their bodies. The Elysian fields to which Menelaus was transported, were a land of perpetual spring at the end of the earth. Ganymede's adventure was different in that he was brought to the abode of the gods themselves in order to serve them as cup bearer.

For the Babylonians, there seems to have been but one exception to the rule according to which all mankind eventually goes to Aralu. Parnapishtim, perhaps the prototype of Noah, was miraculously

or less verbatim from W. Ward Fowler: *The Religious Experience of the Roman People;* pages 385–389.

saved from a rainstorm that caused general destruction. He was, moreover, transported to a place vaguely described as "distant" and situated at the "confluence of the streams," probably an island in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf, where he continues to live in blessedness. His appearance is, however, unchanged. A certain Gilgamesh, the hero of a Babylonian epic, seeks Parnapishtim in the belief that he has the power to cure him. On perceiving him, Gilgamesh exclaims:—

"I gaze at thee in amazement, Parnapishtim.
Thy appearance is normal. As I am, so art thou.
. . . . . .
Thou art completely equipped for the fray.
. . . . . .
Tell me how thou didst come to obtain eternal life among the gods?" [3]

No reason is adduced for the escape of the Babylonian hero from the dreary world of the inactive shades; no religious nor ethical merit belongs to him. The best that is said of him is that he is a "very clever one." Whatever may be the reason for his good fortune and that of Menelaus and Ganymede, these instances make clear the dislike of the world of the dead, the presence of a desire for continued life amid happy circumstances, and the belief that such a blessed fate was not altogether impossible, that man was not so far below the gods as to be under any circumstances unworthy of partaking in their immortal happiness.

[3] Morris Jastrow: *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria.* Pages 493–494.

The two Hebrew examples of Enoch[4] who "walked with God" and was taken up unto his Lord; and of Elijah,[5] the fearless servant of Yahweh, who was carried in a chariot of fire by a whirlwind into heaven, reveal the presence among the Jews of the same desires and ideas and, in addition, mark the consciousness of the supreme value of loyalty to the gods. Translation was for these men the reward of moral worth.

But why were not these worthies allowed to pass through death and then made immortal and blessed? If they were translated bodily into a land of immortality, it is probably because to their people the soul could not be sundered from the earthly body without suffering a permanent loss; it became a tenuous, ineffective ghost.

II. THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

This very significant manifestation of some of the forces to which we owe the modern belief found its most vigorous and clearest expression among the Hebrews. Their intense consciousness of national existence made it impossible for them to conceive of their nation as coming to an end. Israel could not be destroyed; its birthright was to rule and endure to the end of time. When disaster upon disaster overtook it, when Judah and later Israel were taken captive, national consciousness, instead of relinquishing its claims to national greatness, reaffirmed them and devised ways by which, in spite of the present humiliation, the hopes of the race would, in some way

[4] Gen. 5:24. [5] II Kings 1-2.

or other, be realized. The oppressed nation dreamt the dream of the *Day of Yahweh* when, the Lord having manifested his might, Israel would be established upon the earth in peace and power.

To this conviction was added later on another, closely connected with immortality, namely the belief that on that blessed Day, the righteous who had descended to Sheol would arise and participate in the triumph of the nation.[6] The faithful were to be resurrected, not in order to live a blessed independent existence somewhere else than on this earth, but in order to be reincorporated *in the earthly life of the nation.* We cannot follow here the gradual formation of this ideal of Isaiah in which the two distinct ideas of a regenerated nation and of the resurrection of the righteous had become united. The second and the third chapters of R. H. Charles' work will gratify the readers' curiosity on these points.[7]

[6] "Thy dead shall live, my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs and the earth shall cast forth the dead."— Isaiah 26:19.

[7] That this conception of an eternal blessed future upon earth in which the dead participate is truly of Hebraic origin, and is not merely borrowed from the religion of Zoroaster, is, in the opinion of Charles, an established fact. He writes, "But as a matter of fact the Jewish doctrine, as it appears in its earliest form in Is. 26, is essentially different from the Mazdean. Thus (1) whereas the former is spiritually conceived as the prerogative of only the righteous in Israel, the latter is a mechanical and ethically indifferent dogma, in accordance with which good and bad alike are raised. Thus whereas the former is specifically the result of right conduct, the latter has no relation to conduct at all. (2) According to the former, only a limited number — the faithful in Israel — are raised; according to the latter, all men of all nationali-

The psychologist notes with interest that the ideas of the Day of Yahweh and of the resurrection of the dead to participate in it, owe their origin to the same class of motives: both spring from a conviction of the insufficiency of this life to satisfy fully the instincts of preservation and completion as enlarged by moral perception.

Similar causes led the Egyptians to a belief in an ideal future state like that of the Hebrews, though less definite and much less firmly established. The *Admonition of an Egyptian Sage*[8] recalls the prophetic books of the Old Testament in which the Messianic Kingdom is announced. I cannot dwell upon this remarkable document, but will reproduce a passage from Breasted that refers to the closing part of the tractate where a picture is drawn "of the ideal sovereign, the righteous ruler with 'no evil in his heart,' who goes about like a 'shepherd' gathering his reduced and thirsty herds. The hope that the advent of the good king is imminent is unmistakable in the final words: 'Where is he to-day? Doth he sleep perchance? Behold his might is not seen.' With his last utterance one involuntarily adds 'as yet.' . . . Whether the coming of this ruler is definitely predicted or not, the vision of his char-

ties and of all times. (3) According to the former, the resurrection was at the beginning of the Messianic kingdom; according to the latter, at its consummation in connection with the final judgment."—*A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity:* London; Adam and Black; 1899. Pages 134, 135.

[8] Alan H. Gardiner: *The Admonition of an Egyptian Sage;* Leipzig; 1909. I follow Breasted: *loc. cit.;* pages 203–216, who accepts the reading of Dr. H. C. Lange. For a discussion of that reading see Gardiner's *Introduction.*

acter and his work is here unmistakably lifted up by the ancient sage—lifted up in the presence of the living king and those assembled with him, that they may catch something of its splendor. This is, of course, Messianic nearly fifteen hundred years before its appearance among the Hebrews."

III. THE RECOGNITION OF THE INSUFFICIENCY OF NATIONAL HOPES, THE CONSEQUENT ESTABLISHMENT OF INDIVIDUAL RELATIONS WITH THE GODS, AND THE DAWN OF THE MODERN BELIEF IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

Intellectual and moral growth meant unavoidably that, side by side with the strong social consciousness characteristic of the earlier stages of social development, must appear a sense of individual worth and responsibility. The moment came when no dream of national triumph and greatness could completely satisfy the moral aspirations of man. This insufficiency could be illustrated in every population which has passed from savagery to civilization. Its earliest expression is found in Egypt, but it is in Hebrew sacred literature that the richest material illustrates the spiritual forces at work in the transformation of the conception of a national into an individual immortality. I shall therefore confine myself almost exclusively to that nation.

The author of the book of Job came near solving the tormenting irrationalities involved in the thought of a mortal being ending miserably in death by positing another life in which the present one would find its explanation and justification. Job's rebellious complaint against the limit set by death

rises clear and loud; "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down. He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. . . . Thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass. . . . There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down that it will sprout again. . . . Though the root thereof was old in the earth and the stock thereof die in the ground yet through the scent of water it will bud and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth and wasteth away: Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? . . . Man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep." [9] Then a wish, hardly a hope, escapes his lips: "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret, until thy wrath be passed, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me. If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." [10]

The nearest Job comes to the glorious idea of an eternal blessed life with God is in the conviction — perhaps only a fleeting persuasion — that after death he will enjoy for a moment a vision of God, who will then vindicate his mysterious ways. Although an endless continuance of life in communion with God is nowhere even hinted at by Job, nevertheless, his profound sense of the claims of justice makes him a forerunner of the great Jewish prophets who conceived the resurrection of the faithful and a blessed existence with God.

[9] Job 14: 1–12. [10] *Loc. cit.;* 5: 13, 14.

Job seemed to have been ignorant of the existence of the primary belief in immortality, although we know it to have been familiar to those about him. But why should he have referred to it? He could not have had any use for the traditional belief; Sheol offered no solution to the problems that tormented him; it preserved nothing that he wished to preserve; it was an altogether irrelevant tradition.

Fifteen hundred years earlier than the Book of Job, the Egyptians were already wrestling with an acutely painful sense of the inadequacy and mystery of life. A most remarkable dialogue of an unnamed writer with his own soul has been preserved to us. The document belongs to the Middle Kingdom (2160–1788) B. C. Unmerited misfortune upon misfortune has fallen upon the unhappy man. The burden of life has become so heavy that he determines to take his life. But he shrinks from the grave and enters upon a long dialogue with his soul. The first part concludes with the philosophy of "eat, drink, and be merry for to-morrow we die." From this it proceeds to demonstrate that life, far from being an opportunity for pleasure, is more intolerable than death. A terrible indictment of society follows. The writer finds in it only corruption, dishonesty, injustice, and unfaithfulness. It is not, however, on this note that the tractate ends. "Earlier in the struggle with his soul, the sufferer had expressed the conviction that he should be justified hereafter. He now returns to this conviction in the fourth poem, with which the remarkable document closes. It therefore concludes with a solution likewise found

among those discerned by Job — an appeal to justification hereafter." [11]

National misfortune might vivify rather than destroy the conviction of an immortal national destiny; but when disaster was clearly irreparable, the thought of a final national triumph would seem sheer madness. Then, the individual was thrown back upon himself, and dreams of a glorious earthly Messianic Kingdom gave way before the hope of a blessed immortality with God in heaven. As a matter of fact, the time of the formation of the new belief in Palestine and in Greece, and of its spread in Rome, was a time of national disintegration.

There are few events in the religious history of Israel so interesting and important as the transformation, at the moment of Israel's greatest discouragement, of the religion of Yahweh — the national God — into a religion of the individual. As this change is of fundamental interest to the student of the origin of the modern belief among the Hebrews, I shall present it at some length.

For many generations and until irreparable disasters fell upon the nation, the greatness and happiness of Israel was sufficient to the worshiper of Yahweh. His God dealt not with individuals but with the nation; his covenant was with the nation. The nation sinned and the nation was punished; Yahweh visited the virtues and vices of the father upon his children; he smote the first born in the

[11] A. Erman: *Gesprach eines Lebensmueden mit seiner Seele. Abhandlungen der Koenigl. Preuss. Akad;* Berlin; 1896. I follow the English of Breasted: *loc. cit.;* pages 191–197.

land of Egypt; and because Ahab humbled himself before him, he would not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days.[12]

The fall of the Northern Kingdom and later of Judah itself forced a readjustment of this relation, — a readjustment prepared by Amos and Hosea and completed by Jeremiah. The most important outcome of the sore trial to which Jeremiah's faith was subjected by the misfortune of his country was the establishment of individual relations between him and Yahweh. "The fate which Yahweh decrees for him is complete isolation. They all abandon him, one after another, — his relatives, the King, the priests, the prophets, the mass of the people, and finally, even the nobles who at first stood by him. At last only his faithful secretary, Baruch, remains, and even he is separated from him by the walls of the prison. This isolation is Yahweh's will, and is rendered more acute by a number of strict injunctions. He shall take no wife, he shall not mourn with those who mourn, nor rejoice with those who rejoice (16: 1-8). Thus only Yahweh Himself remains to him for communion and intercourse. But now we find what we have never met with in any prophet before this time. Jeremiah appears in continual dialogue with Yahweh. He complains, he contradicts Him, contends with Him, defends himself against Him, but is ever worsted by Him. Yet in the midst of his grief and despair he awakes to the consciousness that the words of Yahweh are really the joy and rapture of his heart, because Yahweh's name has been put upon him, that is to say, because

[12] I Kings 21: 29.

he is Yahweh's possession (15:16). 'Heal me, Yahweh, that I may be healed; help me, that I may be helped, for Thou art my praise' (17:14). It may be said that the true religion of Yahweh had no other refuge in Jerusalem, at the time of its fall, than the person of Jeremiah. Here we find a man abandoned by the whole world and in the deepest depths of misfortune, who has intercourse only with his God and finds his sufficiency in him." [13]

Ezekiel continued the development of Jeremiah's thought. From an individual relation with God, he drew the unavoidable conclusion that each individual is to be rewarded or punished according to his desert. This doctrine permeates the Psalms and the book of Proverbs. But, when limited to earthly existence, the doctrine is obviously false, and Job and the author of Ecclesiastes are up in arms against it: "All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not; as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath." [14] Ezekiel's doctrine could be made true only by positing another life after death in which the injustice of this life would be repaired. The foremost argument of present believers, namely the impossibility of death being the end of man if he owes his existence and ideals to a benevolent Creator, was implicitly present in the consciousness of Job, of Jeremiah, and of Ezekiel.

[13] Karl Budde: *The Religion of Israel to the Exile;* pages 196–197.

[14] Eccl. 9:2; comp. 7:15.

It does not seem that the relation of the great gods of Egypt was at any time during the historical period exclusively with the nation; the Egyptians anticipated the Hebrews in the establishment of personal ethical relations with a Heavenly Father. The kings communicated with Re as individuals, more than as representatives of the nation. In any case, personal piety, with all the high characteristics of communion with God known to the writers of the Psalms, was common during the Restoration Dynasty (663–525 B. C.). It was no longer the formal affirmation of righteousness made in the Book of the Dead, but a humble supplication for mercy and help from the great Shepherd of men. "Thou sole and only one, thou Herakhte who hath none other like him, protector of millions, savior of hundred thousands, who shieldeth him that calleth upon him, thou lord of Heliopolis; punish me not for my many sins. I am one ignorant of his own body, I am a man without understanding. All day I follow after my own dictates as the ox after his fodder." "Come to me, O Re-Herakhte, that thou mayest guide me; for thou art he that doeth, and none doeth without thee. Come to me, Atum, thou art the august god. My heart goes out to Heliopolis." Amon is often represented as a herdsman leading his flock to pasture. In some hymns in which the worshiper breaks out in expressions of love and yearning for communion with his god, personal experience reaches the threshold of love mysticism: "O Amon-Re, I love thee and I have filled my heart with thee. . . . Thou wilt rescue me out of the mouth of men in the day when they speak lies; for the Lord of Truth, he liveth in

truth. I will not follow the anxiety in my heart, for that which Amon hath said flourisheth." [15]

The development of a sense of individual moral obligation towards the gods can also be traced, at the beginning of the Christian era, in the history of the Greeks and of the Romans. "Man is an individual, and as such has certain obligations and responsibilities toward the gods," writes J. B. Carter in his *Religious Life of Ancient Rome.* "These obligations are no longer primarily social; they are distinctly personal, and man is conscious that he has not fulfilled them. To add to the seriousness of the situation, not only is human life very short and uncertain but the world itself is coming to an end." [16]

The breaking down of the national hope and pride, the appearance of the individualistic spirit and of personal relations with the gods, taken in connection with the realization of the spiritual greatness of man — a greatness which is only the more clearly implied in the moral disgust so characteristic of the Romans of the period to which I have referred — constituted a situation altogether favorable to the appearance of a belief in a future life conceived of as a fulfillment of man's most precious ideals.

IV. GREEK SOURCES OF IMMORTALITY. ECSTASY

The origin of the modern belief is often referred to the Greek mysteries and to Plato. Socrates had nothing to teach on this subject. He contemplated

[15] J. H. Breasted: *Development of Religious Thought in Ancient Egypt:* New York; Scribner; 1912. Pages 354, 355.

[16] J. B. Carter: *The Religious Life of Ancient Rome;* page 74.

with apparent equanimity two possibilities: complete unconsciousness, or continuation in a world very much like the Homeric underworld. Plato, on the other hand, taught a lofty doctrine. Souls were self-existent, incorporeal, simple, and eternal spirits. They were uncreated, preëxistent to the body, but from the first destined to animate bodies; which, however, were not necessary to them, and might debase them. At death, if the soul had lived a noble life of successful striving against lust and other passions generated by the body, it underwent a period of purgation in an incorporeal existence, and later entered the glorious world of pure spirits. If, on the contrary, it had suffered the corrupting influence of the body, it was doomed to animate other bodies, low or high, according to the value and dignity of its preceding existence. Reincarnations followed each other until the soul had triumphed over the impediments and temptations which come to it from its association with the body.

This noble conception was in no way established by Plato on a basis of facts, nor was it logically deduced from evident propositions. It bears all the marks of a creation of desire. The arguments adduced in its support in the Phædrus are those of a moralist and poet. What Plato wanted was a doctrine that satisfied man's highest aspirations. As a matter of fact, this doctrine fitted very ill with another doctrine of this philosopher, the well known doctrine of ideas; but he valued more highly a scheme of things satisfying to the heart and to the will, than one logically consistent; a desire to enlarge and

beautify human nature was the most potent inspiration of his philosophical thinking. Hence the spell exercised by Platonic immortality; it draws man onward towards realms he would fain inhabit.

Despite important differences, the Platonic doctrine of the soul includes what is essential to the Christian doctrine, namely unending continuation in a purified and glorified condition. Preëxistence and transmigration, included in the Greek conception and excluded from the Christian, are from our point of view secondary differentiations.[17]

But the Platonic doctrine did not really originate with the Greek philosopher. He tells us himself that he got it from the Orphic priests. The immortality of the soul and its gradual purification in successive incarnations in bodies of men or animals, until it has freed itself completely from the limitations of matter, was Orphic teaching. We must then look back from Plato to this Orphic cult. It was addressed to Dionysos by a sect that had evolved a definite system of religio-philosophic belief, the chief article of which was the double composition of man: one part mortal, coming from the Titans, the other divine. Man's task was to rid himself of the titanic element, which corresponded to the body, in order to return pure to God. The deliverance of the soul could not be achieved suddenly, nor without the help-

[17] The widest divergence between these doctrines appears when Plato describes the disembodied soul as "pure reason." If pure rationality were intended to involve the loss of personality, Platonic immortality could not be assimilated to the Christian conception; for, without the preservation of personality, immortality in the Christian sense does not exist.

ing mediation of Orpheus, who, let it be noted, demanded, as condition of salvation from rebirth, a pure life.

But if we know that the belief in immortality constituted the essential tenet of the Orphic cult, we do not know how it came to be there. There are undeniable Pythagorean elements in the cult, and it is not impossible that its main tenets should have come from the far east where transmigration was a widespread belief long before it appeared in Greece. However that may be, the cult of Dionysos introduced an element unknown to any other Grecian cult. I allude to the frenzy that possessed its devotees. "The celebration took place," says Rohde, "in the dead of night on the mountain tops by the flickering light of torches. Noisy music resounded; the pealing tones of cymbals, the hollow thunder of great timbrels mingled with the frenzy-summoning harmony of the deep voiced flutes. Stirred by this wild music, the crowd of worshipers danced and shouted in exultation. We have no mention of songs; for these, the vigorous dancing left no breath. The dance was not the rhythmic dance with which perhaps the Greeks of Homer's age accompanied their pæans, but a frenzied, whirling, plunging sort of round dance in which the crowd of inspired devotees rushed forward over the hill slopes. For the most part it was women, oddly clad, who whirled about in these dances to the point of exhaustion. They wore *bassaren*, long flowing garments, apparently made of fox-skins; over these they wore deer skins with the horns sometimes remaining on the head. . . . Thus do they rave until they have

reached the utmost excitement. In this 'holy madness' they rush upon the animals chosen for the sacrifice, and seize and rend them, and tear off with their teeth the bloody flesh, which they devour raw." [18] In the ecstasy of their excitement, the worshipers thought themselves divine or at least possessed by the god.[19]

If the practices I have described were new in Greek religion at the time of the introduction of the worship of Dionysos, ecstatic intoxication had long been an essential part of old Indic worship. In the cult of Soma, the priests, if not the people, became intoxicated from drinking a preparation of the moon-plant and thought themselves possessed of divine power. Practices aiming at a similar result exist among present day savages. "In nearly every savage tribe we find a knowledge of narcotic plants which were employed to induce strange and vivid hallucinations or dreams. . . . The Negroes of the Niger had their 'fetish water,' the Greek Indians of Florida their 'black drink,' for this purpose. In many parts of the United States the natives smoked stra-

[18] Erwin Rohde: *Psyche; Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube;* Tubingen; 1907; 4th Ed.; Vol. II, pages 9, 10.

[19] The relation that existed in the Greek mind between ecstasy and the divine is well known. Plato wrote in the *Phædrus,* "There is a possession and a madness inspired by the Muses, which seizes upon a tender and a virgin soul, and, stirring it up to rapturous frenzy, adorns in ode and other verse the countless deeds of elder time for the instruction of after ages. But whosoever without the madness of the Muses comes to knock at the doors of poesy, from the conceit that haply by force of art he will become an efficient poet, departs with blasted hopes, and his poetry, the poetry of sense, fades into obscurity before the poetry of madness."

monium, the Mexican tribes swallowed the *peyotl* and the snake-plant, the tribes of California and the Samoyeds of Siberia had found a poisonous toadstool; all to bring about communication with the Divine and to induce ecstatic visions." [20] The Indians of New Mexico who are "unacquainted with intoxicating liquors . . . find drunkenness in the fumes of a certain herb smoked through a stone tube and used chiefly during their religious festivals." [21]

One may venture the generalization that everywhere, at every level of development, states of intoxication are regarded as religious states *per excellence*.[22] Why this extraordinary association of ecstasy with the divine? The ready answer is that ecstasy, whether it be produced by physical or by psychical means, inspires a conviction of superhuman, limitless power; that it brings visions and, with them, belief in the power of performing wondrous deeds: healing, destroying enemies, forecasting the future, etc. That such is the belief of those who indulge in the religious practices referred to, is well established.

In so far as the cult of Dionysos is regarded as transforming the worshiper into a divinity merely during ecstasy, it does not offer anything unusual. But when one attributes to these Orphic rites the origin of belief in immortality, one derives from them

[20] David Brinton: *The Religion of Primitive Peoples;* page 67.

[21] H. H. Bancroft: *Native Races;* Vol. I, pages 566, 567.

[22] In a book on religious mysticism now in preparation will be included an essay on ecstasy and intoxication in religion. I shall therefore leave undeveloped several points which I should otherwise discuss here.

more than we know to have come from like experiences among savage populations. Thus, if the Mexican Indians thought themselves divine while under the influence of their sacred plant, they did not imagine that thereby the boon of passing after death to the dwelling of the gods was conferred upon them. It may seem to us that once divine, must necessarily mean always divine. But when we keep in mind that the phenomena incident to intoxication were the mark of divinity, we realize that with their disappearance the worshiper must have thought himself human again. The idea of *temporary* possession by the God fitted the experience.

There is, however, no insuperable difficulty in admitting that a proof of man's final redemption should have been seen in the transformation taking place in the worshiper during possession by the God, *provided a sufficiently strong and clear desire be present for a blessed immortality.* In populations that had not reached a sufficient mental and moral development to possess this desire, the intoxication-experience remained without significance regarding life after death. The ethical conditions of salvation imposed in the Orphic mysteries make clear that Greek consciousness had already reached a high degree of moral sensitiveness; and we know that at the time in question the realization of the insufficiency of this life prompted men in Greece, as it did in Egypt and in Palestine, toward belief in the fulfillment of human personality after death.

In any case, and whether or not a belief in a blessed immortality originated independently in Greece out of ecstatic experiences and a realization

of the inadequacy of this life, or whether it was imported from India through Pythagorean teaching, the ecstatic experience is a factor essentially different from the ethical forces we saw at work in the consciousness of the Hebrew seers. It is characterized by a consciousness of absence of impediments to the realization of desire, of limitless power, of infinitude,— this, rather than intense emotion, is the most impressive aspect of ecstasy, as well as the fundamental fact in religious mystical experiences of every sort.

Wherever it appeared ecstasy was a powerful ally, if not the cause, of the will-to-believe in a blessed immortality; but it may be said without hesitation that it was not a necessary factor. Even in its absence, the modern conception of immortality would have taken shape in men's minds. If any proof of this was wanted, the Hebrews would provide it.

According to Rohde, the fundamental incompatibility between the old belief in Hades and the new belief in immortality consists in the affirmation of "immortality" made by the latter. This seems to me an error that mars a work admirable in many ways. If the soul is immortal, says Rohde, then it is in its essential property identical with the gods; it belongs to their realm. Who, in Greece, says eternal, says divine; these terms are interchangeable. That is the true reason why in the religion of the Greek people the divine plan separated for all times, in space as in essence, the world of gods and the world of men: the gods, and the gods alone are immortal.[23] For this reason, in Rohde's opinion, Greek religion could neither grow into the new belief, nor accept

[23] Rohde: *Loc cit.;* Vol. II; pages 1–37.

it if presented to it, unless a new experience, a revelation, overcame the conviction fundamental to the old religion. The ecstasy of Dionysiac worship proved to be the necessary revelation.

To regard immortality as the particular boon secured by the new belief in survival, as Rohde does, is to miss the mark. We have seen in an earlier chapter that in the old belief the shades lived on an existence usually of indefinite duration, and also that the idea of finitude was not repellent to the savages. They were not disturbed when the idea occurred to them that their ghostly selves were not immortal. According to their stories, some ghosts died, and others continued endlessly. Immortality interested them little: the important question was the behavior towards themselves of the ghosts that survived.

At a higher stage of development, the situation was still the same with respect to immortality. The Babylonians did not bemoan the mortality of the shades, but their miserable existence. So did the Hebrews. It is the descent to Aralu and to Hades, not the possible destruction of the shades, that afflicted these populations. In the religion of the Nether God, the Egyptian found himself in a similar situation. Nowhere was the essential mortality of the soul credited, and everywhere its unlimited continuation was admitted either for all men, or at least for special classes of men.

The desire that arose at a certain moment and grew in intensity in every one of the nations we have considered, was not for immortality as such but for a future life which would fulfill affective and ethical cravings. Nothing short of a "divine" existence could do that. With the exception of Plato and a few other metaphysicians, men would have held the promise of an undeterminate existence — a hundred or a thousand years — in the glorious company of the gods, equal to the "immortality" they are said to have believed in. Did not Job find

profound consolation in the hope of meeting God face to face for a single moment? The metaphysicians themselves, I surmise, would have sung the future millennium with all the superlatives at their command, and, for the rest, would have taken pride in the generosity of the prospective but distant surrender of their fully realized personality. Who could be so insatiable as to complain of sudden and painless annihilation at the end of 1000 years of heaven? In any case, absolute immortality is not to be talked of when one is concerned with religious life. It belongs to metaphysical speculation.

I do not mean to deny by the foregoing remarks that Plato and other protagonists of the new belief thought of a never ending existence, but merely that that was not the essential gain secured by the exchange of the old for the new belief.

V. THE ABSENCE OF CONTINUITY BETWEEN THE PRIMARY AND THE MODERN BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

When surveying the historical development of the beliefs in immortality, one cannot but wonder at the absence of continuity between the primary and the modern belief. Although one finds among savage populations rudiments of the idea of a heavenly paradise and of social and moral retribution in a life after death, nevertheless, when, during the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, the modern belief made its appearance among peoples far above savagery, it presented itself as something altogether new, without antecedents, and unrelated to any other existing belief.

Why did the primary notion of continuation assume more and more definitely a repulsive form in-

stead of being gradually transformed into the modern conception? In the presence of this difficulty, we must recall that between a belief born, as the modern belief was, of desire for the realization of moral ideals, and one forced upon men irrespective of their wishes by the phenomena I have named, there is no likeness whatsoever beyond the mere idea of continuation. In no other respect do the two beliefs bear any relation to each other. The earlier belief appears as an unavoidable interpretation, devoid of any moral significance, of facts directly perceived; the other is a creation of desire. The one came to point exclusively to a wretched and painful existence; the other contemplated from the first endless continuation in a state of increased or of completed perfection, and it incited the living to ceaseless efforts in order to make themselves fit for that blessed consummation.

If one keeps in mind these different, even divergent characteristics, the failure of the one belief gradually to pass into the other ceases to astonish. Progressive development is possible only when the later bears to the earlier the relation of flower to seed. No such relation holds between the two conceptions of immortality. The early effect upon the primary belief of the desire for happiness and moral completion, noticeable among some savages, had no future because it was antagonistic to dominant characteristics inherent to that belief.

A cursory view of Egyptian religions might suggest that in that land, if not elsewhere, primary and modern immortality were genetically related. But a fuller

knowledge compels the rejection of this opinion. Our earliest information already indicates the presence of two religions, that of the Nether God and that of the Sun God. In the first, the belief in survival bears all the marks of primary continuation. In the second, immortality is akin to the modern belief both in origin and character: it springs from desire, and it promises happiness. It differs from the modern belief in the inconspicuousness of the moral element and in the presence of a requirement unknown to the modern belief: the earthly body must be somehow kept together and tended, otherwise life will be extinguished or reduced to a miserable existence. I have had occasion to indicate how, with the recognition of moral values, the conditions of admission to the sky were moralized, and the future life was looked upon as realizing a state of moral perfection as well as of physical well being.

The two Egyptian conceptions of continuation after death were thus parts of two different and antagonistic religions; one belonging to the populace, identical to primary immortality; the other to the nobles, in essential features similar to the modern belief.

But, if the two conceptions of continuation may not be regarded as possessing a common source, they existed side by side for many centuries. Even today, there are Christians who believe in ghosts. It is not usually recognized how incongruous the ghost belief is with the idea of the future life officially acknowledged by the church. According to Christian teaching, immediately after death or after sojourn in purgatory, the souls go to heaven where they enjoy a blessed communion with Christ, or to hell where they suffer dread torments. They are in no case supposed to remain on earth or to return to it and

roam about human habitations. Roaming ghosts are of another lineage than Christian spirits; they are survivals of the primary conception of survival.

The popular belief in haunted places and apparitions persists, although in opposition to the modern belief, because dreams and visions, to which the old belief was originally due, have still the power to vivify ancient folk-tales.

But what of the Christian hell? Is it not a direct continuation of the later form of the primary conception? I do not think that it should be so regarded, for the essential significance of hell belongs no more than the essential character of heaven to the primary belief in continuation. According to the primary idea, as it existed in the countries we have considered, the dwelling of the dead is never a place of retribution, it has no moral significance at all; whereas the essential character of hell is that it is a place of punishment for evil done in this life.

Hell belongs to the new conception as the counterpart of heaven. The hatred of the bad is a corollary of the love of the good; and the infliction of suffering is a crude way of expressing hatred of evil and of protecting oneself and those one loves against danger. The constitution of the Christian hell, like that of the old style prison, is quite innocent of any intention to reform. The motives that created hell are the same that have built jails: self-protection, retribution and hatred. Christian consciousness, seeking an adequate expression for its imperfect sense of retributive justice and its hatred of sin and sinners, may, however, have remembered the vague, joyless underworld of the ancients.

The only other noteworthy solution of the problem of death was developed in or near India. There, the idea of repeated embodiments of the Karma took the place of one earthly existence continued in heaven. I wish a study of the Hindoo conception of continuation after death and of the ultimate fate of man might have been included in this volume.

CHAPTER V

THE DEDUCTIVE DEMONSTRATION OF MODERN IMMORTALITY

I. THE METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENTS

The primary and the modern beliefs were both at first naïve beliefs, uncritically accepted; the former resting upon an apparent direct sensory apprehension of the fact of survival, the latter upon profound and intense yearnings for it. But when, in the course of time, the habit of critical reflection had been formed, neither dreams and visions, nor cravings could longer be regarded as intellectually convincing grounds of belief. In this situation an effort was made to legitimate the modern faith in survival by placing it, above individual desire, upon a universally valid foundation. This effort, continued for centuries, produced the so-called "metaphysical proofs" of immortality.[1]

[1] The several classes of factors which produce and maintain belief are brought out by the following illustration. I know a laborer who is tormented by the desire to make money. Some time ago, he showed me a heavy mass of dark gray sand which he had extracted from the bottom of an old well. He thought the sand contained gold, and had spent much time and money in order to establish the truth of his belief. A desire for wealth was at the root of this man's conviction; but the desire alone would not have suggested the idea that the sand contained gold. It was of great weight and he had, moreover, observed in it brilliant yellow particles. Therefore, even

An important fact to bear in mind concerning these proofs is that they were elaborated at a time when the conception of an immortal blessed future was generally familiar; hence, they did not originate the conception; no more did they usually produce belief, they merely attempted to justify the existing belief. The relation of the belief in immortality to the arguments for it, is similar to that of Christian beliefs in general to the demonstration of their truth by the scholastics. The church affirmed revealed truths, and the philosophers set about showing their agreement with reason.

Metaphysical arguments are instances of deductive

though many reasons were urged against his conviction, he believed that he had found gold. He did not, of course, rest content at this point. He wanted a scientific demonstration of the truth of his belief, and accordingly he had the sand analyzed. When a reliable chemist reported the absence of gold, he placed samples in other hands. Despite several concordant negative analyses, this man has not yet altogether given up hope.

Three factors are to be observed in this situation: a compelling desire for gold, the direct observation of certain facts (weight, color) interpreted as signifying the presence of gold, and an effort to verify the report of the senses and thus prove scientifically the realization of the desire.

These three factors need not be present in every belief. Usually, however, the beliefs of cultivated people are supported by factors of these three kinds; such, for instance, is the case of the modern belief in immortality. To keep in mind these several roots of belief is responsible for much fruitless discussion. Sensory demonstration leaves us indifferent unless desire or repulsion is awakened. One of the practical consequences of the importance of desire in the matter of belief is that, in order to convince, it is usually much more efficacious to incite desire than to demonstrate truth. Every one knows that to convince is easy when the will to be persuaded is present; while the minutest flaw assumes gigantic proportions in one averse to belief.

reasoning which differs in kind from inductive reasoning in that the former derives the proposition to be established from some more inclusive proposition regarded as self-evident, or as already proved; whereas an inductive demonstration is made by way of generalization from the observation of a sufficient number of facts. It follows from the nature of a deductive proof that, however, strictly logical it may be, there remains always the previous question of the truth or adequacy of the major premise upon which hangs the whole demonstration.

My task does not involve a study of the validity of the metaphysical arguments; I am concerned only with the various influences that make for belief, whether logically legitimate or not. And since the metaphysical arguments are, as we shall see, so far discredited that even the most eager believers in immortality admit their inadequacy, I might say nothing more about them. Their influence is limited not only by their weakness, but also by the ignorance in which most men remain of them, and still more by the general indifference to a strictly logical procedure when establishing beliefs. Most men find their way by a long process of trial and error; they blunder into "prog[illegible]" by following lines of least resistance, discov[illegible] chance. With them, desire for logical cons[illegible]ency [illegible] intellectual clarity is but an occasional [illegible]ch eas[illegible] relieved by a haphazard scratch.

Had th[illegible] meta[illegible]nysical a[illegible]guments never been formulated, the hold of the be[illegible]ef would not, I surmise, have been materially differ[illegible]nt; I shall, nevertheless, examine the more important [illegible]f these arguments, add-

ing, when it seems worth while and when it can be done without entering into too lengthy statements, the main objections that may be raised against them. But since this is on my part work of supererogation, let no one find fault with me for incompleteness or lack of thoroughness. Any one with a marked dislike for the rattling of dry bones had better read only the section on the Moral Argument, and pass on to the next chapter; the others may, as they proceed with these notes, find it interesting to ascertain how far their own attitude towards the belief in immortality has been influenced one way or another by these arguments.[2]

ARGUMENT FROM THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF ALL REALITY

I begin with the argument for idealism, although it does not really demonstrate the immortality of individual beings, but merely of Mind.

In the main, this argument is familiar; it gets its start in the observation that the physical world is known through sensation and in no other way.

[2] "The whole of the prevalent metaphysics of the present century is one tissue of suborned evidence in favor of religion . . . involving a misapplication [illegible] pulses and speculative capacities. . . . It is time [illegible] more impartially and therefore more deliberately [illegible] ally done, whether all this straining to prop up bel[illegible] equire so great an expense of intellectual toil and [illegible] keep them standing, yield any sufficient retur[illegible] better [illegible] ell being; and whether that end would not be [illegible] wers to [illegible] stre[illegible] by the application of the same mental po[illegible] urces of [illegible] rtue and [illegible] ing and enlargement of those other so[illegible] support or sanction [illegible] piness which stand in no need of thets."—John Stuart Mill: [illegible] Su[illegible] natural beliefs and inducemen[illegible] th *Utility of Religion.*

Now, sensation is a mental experience. It would seem to follow that the so-called physical world, as far at least as we can know anything about it, is after all of the nature of mind, i.e., that the Universe is in essence of one substance, that of spirit.

The argument encounters a serious difficulty when it is affirmed that sensation need not resemble the physical reality to which it is due, for the cause need not resemble its effect. The physical world, known in sensation, need not therefore be of the mental order; it may be of an altogether different nature to sensation. But this difficulty may be overcome; for it can be proved, the argument affirms, that although the cause of sensation need not resemble sensation, the existence of the physical world as a substance implies its kinship to the nature of spirit. The conclusion of the matter is, that " all substance must possess certain characteristics which are essential to the nature of spirit." Thus the apparent dualism, matter and spirit, is transcended: an idealistic monism is reached.

But this argument, supposing it to be valid, leads to the eternal self-existence of Mind, not of each individual mind. The ablest representatives of the idealistic philosophy have not claimed more. The opinion of Hegel, for instance, is stated thus by Andrew Seth:

" The Hegelian system is as ambiguous on the question of man's immortality as on that of the personality of God, and for precisely the same reason — namely, because the self of which assertions are made in the theory is not a real but logical self. Hence, although passages may be quoted which

seem direct assertions of immortality, they are found, on further examination, to resolve themselves into statements about the Absolute Ego, or the unity of self-consciousness as such. The Ego, it is argued, is, in a strict sense, timeless or out of time, and it becomes absurd, therefore, to apply time predicates to it and to speak of its origin or decease. As applied to the immortality of the individual self, however, this argument proves nothing . . . it is the immortality of the Absolute Self which it proves. In like manner Aristotle maintained the eternity of Active Reason, and Averroes the immortality of the intellect identical in all men. Spinoza, too, spoke of the *pars æterna nostri.* In no other sense does Hegel speak of the immortality of 'man as spirit'— an immortality or eternity which he is at pains to designate as a 'present quality,' an actual possession." [3]

"Death as a finality is the demonstration of the delusion of belief in the universe as intelligible." This sentence from Lotze, another great representative of Absolute Idealism, might be construed into an unqualified affirmation of the immortality of individual souls. That it should not be so construed appears clearly in the following passage:

"The soul is to be viewed as the substantial and permanent subject of the phenomena of our inner life. But that, because the soul is the abiding substance of these phenomena, it must therefore be endowed with an eternal and imperishable duration, as the privilege of its nature — the unprejudiced mind will never be convinced of the certainty of that

[3] *Hegelianism and Personality;* 1893. Pages 235–238.

inference. . . . We have no warrant for assuming that what once is must necessarily always be. . . . Then if the connection of our other views tends so strongly to make us see in all finite things but creations of the Eternal, it is impossible that the destinies of the individual can be other than according to the dictates of the whole. That will last forever which on account of its excellence and its spirit must be an abiding part of the universe; what lacks that preserving worth will perish. We dare not judge and determine which mental development wins immortality by the eternal significance whereto it has raised itself, and to which this is denied. We must not seek to decide either whether all animal souls are perishable, or all human souls imperishable, but take refuge in the belief that to each being right will be done." [4]

ARGUMENT FROM THE SIMPLICITY OF THE SOUL

In following another line of thought, which I shall not reproduce, one comes to the conclusion that the soul is one and indivisible. This admitted, its indestructibility is said to follow, for only that which is made up of parts can be decomposed and thus destroyed. Already Plato had advanced this argument. It was taken up among others by Berkeley. After claiming to have shown that the soul is indivisible, incorporeal, unextended, he adds: —

"Nothing can be plainer than that the motions, changes, decays, and dissolutions which we hourly see befall natural bodies (and is what we mean by the course of nature) cannot possibly affect an

[4] *Microcosmus;* Book III, chap. V, pages 389, 390.

active, simple, uncompounded substance: such a being therefore is indissoluble by the force of nature; that is to say — the soul of man is *naturally* immortal." A. C. Frazer, who quotes the above, adds, "Bishop Butler takes for granted that all assumption of death's being the destruction of living beings must go upon the supposition that they are compounded and so disruptible." [5]

The unsoundness of the argument from the simplicity and individuality of the soul was shown by Kant.[6] According to him, neither logic nor science can demonstrate immortality. It is a practical postulate. Holiness, or perfection, is required of us by the moral law. Of this perfection we are incapable at any moment of earthly existence. It is only possible on the supposition of an endless duration of the individual being upon whom the requirement is imposed. Immortality is thus seen to be inseparably connected with the moral law, i. e., it is, in Kantian terms, *a postulate of pure practical reason,* not a truth logically demonstrable.[7]

Despite Kant's disproof, the argument from the simplicity of the soul still enjoys some vogue. It reappears to-day, for instance in the crude philosophical writings of the distinguished physicist, Sir Oliver Lodge, who claims permanence "for the essence, the intrinsic reality, the *soul* of anything, and transitoriness for its bodily presentment — i. e., for all such things as special groupings, arrange-

[5] A. C. Frazer: *Selections from Berkeley:* Clarendon Press; 1891. Pages 142, 143.

[6] Book II, chap. I, of the *Transcendental Dialectic.*

[7] *Crit. of Practical Reason; Dialectic;* Chap. II, sect. 4.

ments, systems, which are liable to break up into their constituent elements." One might point to this scientist as a striking instance of how recklessly metaphysical arguments are made to serve desires. In the paper from which I have just quoted, we are told that whatever really "exists in the highest sense" is immortal. "We have only to ask whether our personality, our character, our self, is sufficiently individual, sufficiently characteristic, sufficiently developed — in a word, sufficiently *real;* for if it is, there can be no doubt of its continuance." [8] I might add that individuality, which appears in the above quotation as a test of immortality, was for Aristotle, and for the Absolute Idealists after him, the very mark of transitoriness: —

"Individuality (the being *unum numero* in a species) and immortality are in his view incompatible facts; the one excludes the other. In assigning (as he so often does) a final cause or purpose to the widespread fact of procreation of species by animals and vegetables, he tells us that every individual living organism, having once attained the advantage of existence, yearns and aspires to prolong this forever, and to become immortal. But this aspiration cannot be realized. Nature has forbidden it, or is inadequate to it; no individual can be immortal. Being precluded from separate immortality, the individual approaches as near to it as is possible, by generating a new individual like itself, and thus perpetuating the species. . . . *Noûs* is immortal; but the individual Sokrates considered as noëtic or intellectual, can no more be immortal than the same

[8] *Hibbert Journal,* Vol. VI; 1908. Pages 291–304; 564–565.

individual considered as sentient or reminiscent." [9]

The Stoics held a similar opinion. According to their teaching, the individual soul does not possess independent activity, but will be ultimately resolved into the primary substance, the Divine Being.

ARGUMENTS FROM AN INTELLIGENT NON-MORAL, AND FROM AN INTELLIGENT AND MORAL FIRST CAUSE

Under this heading we may separate three arguments.

(a) *From the necessary presence in God of an idea* Spinoza, whose Absolute was Non-Moral, deduced in the following manner the eternal existence of individual souls: —

" In God there necessarily exists a conception or idea which expresses the essence of the human mind. This conception or idea is therefore necessarily something which pertains to the essence of the human mind. But we ascribe to the human mind no duration which can be limited by time, unless in so far as it expresses the actual existence of the body, which is manifested through duration, and which can be limited by time, that is to say, we cannot ascribe duration to the mind except while the body exists.

" But, nevertheless, since this something is that which is conceived by a certain eternal necessity through the essence itself of God, this something which pertains to the essence of the mind will necessarily be eternal." [10]

[9] Grote's *Aristotle;* 1883. Page 490.

[10] Prop. 22, pt. 5; 13, pt. 2; corol. prop. 8, pt. 2; 22, pt. 5; 23, pt. 5; W. Hale White: *Spinoza's Ethics:* Oxford Univ. Press; 4th ed.; 1910. Page 269.

(b) *The Moral Augument.*—The existence of a moral God being assumed, it is argued that the Universe must have a moral purpose. If the Creator is at the same time benevolent and righteous, he cannot have endowed man with a nature from which proceed needs and ideals unrealizable because utterly at variance with reality. There must be, therefore, it is claimed, a way by which the demands of reason, love, and justice are to be gratified, and this is impossible if individual life ends with death. This is the argument which has gained the widest circulation. Martineau calls it the "real evidence." [11] On every hand, it is urged upon us that whoever believes in God, must also believe in survival of death; for, without survival the Universe could not be regarded as the expression of a divine, benevolent purpose.

Andrew Seth formulates the argument thus: —

"For, according to the theory that human self-consciousness is but like a spark struck out in the dark to die away presently upon the darkness wherein it has arisen, the universe consists essentially in the evolution and reabsorption of transitory forms — forms that are filled with knowledge and shaped by experience, only to be emptied and broken by death. But it is a mockery to speak as if the universe had any real or worthy End, if it is merely the eternal repetition of this Danaïd labor. And an account which contradicts our best-founded standards of value, and fails to satisfy our deepest

[11] James Martineau: *A Study of Religion.* Vol. II, page 367.

needs, stands condemned as inherently unreasonable and incredible." [12]

Compare with the above this passage taken from F. C. S. Schiller:

"In our present phase of existence the moral life cannot be lived out to its completion, it is not permitted to display its full fruitage of consequences for good and for evil. Whenever Might triumphs over Right; whenever the evildoers succeed and the righteous perish; whenever goodness is trampled under foot and wickedness is exalted to high places; nay, whenever the moral development of character is cut short and rendered vain by death,— we are brought face to face with facts which constitute an indictment of cosmic justice, which are inconsistent with the conception of the world as a moral order. Unless, therefore, we can vindicate this order by explaining away the facts that would otherwise destroy it, we have to abandon the ethical judgment of the world of our experience as good or bad; we have to admit that the ideal of goodness is an illusion of which the scheme of things recks not at all.

"But if we refuse to do this (and whether we are not bound to refuse to abandon our ideals at the first show of opposition will presently be considered), how shall the ethical harmony be restored if not by the supposition of a prolongation and perfection of the moral life in the future? Only so can character be made of real significance in the scheme of things; only so is it something worth possessing, an investment more permanent and more

[12] Andrew Seth: *Hegelianism and Personality.*

decisive of our weal and woe than all the outward goods men set their hearts upon, rather than a transitory bubble to whose splendor it matters not one whit whether it be pure translucence refracting the radiance of the sunlight, or the iridescent film that coats decay." [13]

The outcome of these considerations is the necessity of immortality if the world is to be conceived as rational, or as having a worthy end. Short of this, we are told, the moral life cannot be lived out. Therefore immortality is declared a *moral postulate.* Assuming for the present the truth of this last momentous affirmation, the question remains whether man is actually to continue after death, or whether the ideal of goodness is never to be fulfilled. The ethical argument, as stated in the preceding quotations, does not solve, it merely forces the dilemma upon us. It is only when, instead of affirming merely the necessity, for the gratification of human needs and desires, of the existence of a moral God or Order and therefore of immortality, one affirms in addition his existence, that a satisfactory solution is gained. But these two affirmations are far from equivalent; the existence of a certain kind of God may involve necessarily the satisfaction of man's ideal desires, but the presence of these desires does not necessitate the existence of that God; desires may be disappointed.

Let it be observed that there is great danger here of reasoning in a circle. One may start from the human moral constitution and its demands, and

[13] *Humanism, Philosophical Essays:* London; 1903. Pages 252–254.

affirm that they imply the existence of a moral Creator. Then one may declare it impossible for such a God not to fulfill the expectations he has placed in man.

Variations in the form of this argument appear when it is written from the point of view of evolutionary development and from that of the preservation of values. In the first case, it is affirmed that the history of animal forms discloses the intention on the part of their Designer to produce conscious, moral beings. How then, admit that he would allow a purpose so plainly inscribed in animated nature, to be baffled at death? In the second case, it is claimed that a moral Creator must have intended the preservation of moral values. Now, all the highest values are bound up with personality; none of the virtues may be conceived as existing otherwise than in persons. How, then, could God permit the stupendous waste which would be involved in the destruction of personality at death? [14]

Two remarks remain to be made: (1) In the

[14] Immortality derived from the idea of permanent values is frequently held to be not for all men, but for the worthy only. Man is mortal until a wonderful something is born in him, and then he becomes immortal, destined to continue forever the ascent begun on this earth. The difficulties raised by this notion are stupendous. Whence this germ of immortality? How are we to conceive its nature and how to understand its tremendous effect upon the individual? Shall we hold that doctrinal beliefs, or good works, or righteousness of purpose differentiate those who have won immortality? If in all the voluminous literature dealing with conditional immortality, there is no satisfactory answer to the many problems raised by this hypothesis, who will wonder?

Among the best works supporting, from the Christian point

forms of it which we have examined, the validity of the moral argument is conditioned by that of the affirmation upon which it rests, namely, that the Universe is the expression of an intelligent, purposive, and benevolent Will. (2) Even though this should be satisfactorily established, the argument itself would contain a fatal flaw. For, as Lotze remarked, the divine purpose assumed in the argument might, at least in the case of some persons, be fully achieved in this life, and thus make immortality superfluous. "We dare not," says he, "judge and determine which mental development wins immortality by the eternal significance whereto it has raised itself and to which this is denied."

Attempts have been made to overcome the weakness inherent in an argument presupposing the existence of a moral God by resting the proof of immortality directly upon facts of the moral life in general or, more specifically, upon the "principle" of the conservation of moral values, or yet upon the gradual development of intellectual and moral consciousness in the animal and human world. The facts of the moral life, it is said, demand the continuation of life after death just as the facts of the physical universe demand the presence of an invisible ether that fills all interstellar space. To reason in this wise is to desert the deductive for the inductive method, the metaphysical for the scientific

of view, conditional immortality, I note the following: — Dr. Van Oosterzee: *Christian Dogmatics;* Canon Gore: *The Epistle to the Romans;* W. W. Clarke: *Christian Theology;* Dr. E. Petavel: *The Problem of Immortality.*

procedure. Any religious "truth" established in this manner could claim equal validity with the hypotheses of science.

The scientific method is certainly as serviceable in religion as outside of it, and it is one of the misfortunes of the modern world that its introduction in the study of religious life has been so long delayed, and that it is even now practiced so grudgingly. But in order to be consistent, those who appeal to scientific procedure should realize that the assimilation of religious verities to scientific hypotheses, if it be done at all, must be done thoroughly; that, for instance, any particular religious "truth" must yield to another as soon as that other is found to agree better with the facts. "Truths" thus established, whether they belong to the religious or to the secular life, are hypotheses; that is, conceptions that may be regarded as valid so long as they seem to work better than any other.

The apologists of religious beliefs who claim for them the validity belonging to scientific propositions, do not usually intend to place religious truths in the precarious position of hypotheses. They have in mind the kind of validity belonging to scientific laws. This is quite another thing. The hypothesis of the ether and the law of the reflection of rays of light by polished surfaces, do not stand on the same level of certitude. The latter does not run the risk of being replaced by another law; it is final. No proposition can claim this absolute validity that is not empirically verifiable. This verification — in the strict sense in which science

demands it — cannot be provided for most religious truths.[15]

The scientist's belief in fixed causal connections, for instance, can actually be shown to correspond to reality. Scientific investigation demonstrates, wherever it penetrates, orderly sequence and quantitative relations. The more searching the investigation, the fuller and the more precise is the demonstration. If any one thinks it worth while to remark that no scientific demonstration of the intelligibility of the Universe is, or can be complete, since man will never know the whole of the Universe, the obvious answer is that, given the constitution of the human mind, the continuous success of science in establishing definite unchangeable relations is enough to warrant the assurance that the assumption which we cherish, because of our need of order, is legitimate. Not only do we want order, but we *find it wherever we look for it.* No corresponding statement may be made concerning the existence of an alleged moral order and of personal immortality. We do not find moral order wherever we seek for it, and we have not been able to verify the belief in immortality.

Evolutionary science has made clear many things, but, alas, it has not uncovered the ultimate designs of Nature; and John Fisk's argument is lame unless it be made to turn upon the existence of a personal God: —

[15] I know that I shall be contradicted by many on the ground of their own "experience." These persons will have occasion to see below, in the discussion of Professor Bacon's affirmation concerning immortality, why their "experience" may be misleading.

"From the first dawning of life we see all things working together toward one mighty goal, the evolution of the most exalted spiritual qualities which characterize Humanity. . . . The more thoroughly we comprehend that process of evolution by which things have come to be what they are, the more we are likely to feel that to deny the everlasting persistence of the spiritual element in Man is to rob the whole process of its meaning." "The case may be fitly summed up in the statement that whereas in its rude beginnings the psychological life was but an appendage to the body, in fully developed Humanity the body is but the vehicle for the soul." [16]

[16] *The Destiny of Man;* 1887. Pages 113–116, 65.

I am reminded here of the pathetic queries of a worthy lady who could not reconcile the Christian God of her catechism with what she saw about her. For twenty-five years this person succeeded in overcoming the doubts suggested by her experiences with a wicked world. After each new inner discussion, she would find again what she calls her "pilgrim's staff," i. e., her confidence in a Providence. A new and more perplexing experience than any of the preceding finally broke her staff, and led her to this naïve solution of the problem of the relation of God to the world. "There came into my mind," she writes, "as clear as day that the contradiction between an all-good and all-powerful God and that which happens in the world, is due simply to the fact that God is absent from the world. He is indeed the Great Creator of whom the heavens declare the glory. He is indeed the Father of humanity, a tender Father who loves us. . . . If God were really in the world, he would not be idle, leaving his children exposed to all their enemies without and within. He would not be blind and unjust, making the tower of Shiloh fall on the passers-by who were no more guilty than others. From the point of view of our sufferings even, it is most sweet and consoling to feel that God is an absent Father. This last hypothesis lifts a heavy weight from my heart, for an absent father is no less a father."—Th. Flournoy: *Observations de*

When we consider not merely what has taken place on this planet since man's appearance on it, but also the numberless other worlds at various stages of frigidity or organic activity, we do not find it possible to read in the brief span of human evolution an indication of an irrevocable purpose on the part of a Power directing the Universe. And, even if there be rational guidance, may not the form of consciousness known to man be a transitory stage to something else, we know not what; leading somewhere, we know not whither?

But if human intelligence has not been able to demonstrate a moral purpose in every part of the Universe, there is no doubt of the presence *in man* of a moral trend or will. This is as well authenticated as any scientific fact. Morality, so far as we know anything about it, has its origin in human consciousness and grows *pari passu* with social life. Can we now with the same assurance with which we affirm that causal sequence, i. e., intelligibility, belongs throughout to the Universe, assert also that morality is of its essence, co-extensive with it, and like it everlasting? Evidently not. We can affirm only that moral tendencies come into existence, and that ideals gradually actualize themselves *in human society:* morality appears as co-extensive with it. So far and no further does science go; it can merely affirm that morality is in process of formation and contingent upon circumstances no more permanent than the circumstances which make bodily life possible. We may all desire that the Universe be in-

Psychologie Religieuse; Observation IV.; *Archives de Psychologie de la Suisse Romande;* 1903. Vol II, pages 342–347.

formed with benevolence and justice, and some may even think they cannot live on worthily and contentedly unless it be so; but for that belief science provides no justification.

II. THE ACKNOWLEDGED INSUFFICIENCY OF THE DEDUCTIVE ARGUMENTS AND THE FALLING BACK UPON DIRECT "INNER EXPERIENCE" OF IMMORTALITY

Of the arguments we have reviewed, only the ethical argument and those drawn from evolution and from the conservation of values enjoy some degree of influence to-day, but not one of them, nor all together, is generally admitted among educated believers in immortality as an adequate proof. The contemporary world has grown suspicious of these arguments, and all that even the believer will claim is that at most they create a *presumption* in favor of immortality.[17] "The hope of immortality" is a favorite expression with theologians who are themselves believers. The Rev. Washington Gladden speaks for the leaders of liberal orthodoxy in the United States when he writes, after setting forth arguments for immortality, that his belief is "of

[17] There are, I know, a few dissident voices among those who have a right to the consideration of the serious student. McTaggard, for instance, writes in *Some Dogmas of Religion,* page 111, "Yet, I think that reasons for the belief in immortality may be found of such strength that they should prevail over all difficulties." It is to be noticed that this acute thinker holds that the arguments for preëxistence are as strong as those for existence after death. If so, the prevalence in Christian countries of this last belief and the almost total absence of the former, offers a striking illustration of the effect of desire upon belief.

course, a glorious hope, a confidence, a strong expectation; it can be nothing more." [18]

Whence this marked change in the attitude of the Christian world? Indications connect the change with a weakening of the belief in a moral Creator and with the diffusion of stricter standards of scientific demonstration.

An interesting double outcome of the new attitude towards deductive arguments is that, on the one hand, men have sought with renewed energy a scientific demonstration of immortality; and, on the other hand, have felt compelled to rely more and more for an assurance of it upon what they call "inner experience," i. e., an experience they think outside the pale of science. We shall consider in the next chapter the scientific search for immortality; at present, let us address ourselves to the curious effort made to get rid of science and overcome skepticism by an appeal to inner experience.

If metaphysical arguments can no longer be relied upon, where shall man find the assurance he needs? "In his own heart and conscience," is the

[18] From a "Symposium on Immortality" in the *Congregationalist,* Boston, 1904. See also *The Christian Hope; A Study of the Doctrine of Immortality* by Wm. A. Brown, professor at Union Theological Seminary, New York; Scribner; 1912.

If, nevertheless, I continue to speak of the "belief" in, and not of the "hope" of, immortality, it is for the sufficient reason that in reality belief and hope run into each other: few beliefs are complete and constant, and few hopes do not grow at times into assurances. Those who, on surveying the grounds for the belief in immortality, conclude that they warrant no more than a hope, are not usually able to maintain consistently that critical attitude.

reply. The reader will observe that this answer reflects the Ritschlian attitude. When it was at last clearly realized that science was an enemy to certain Christian dogmas, and that philosophy could not be relied upon to defend them, Ritschl embraced the only remaining possibility: he claimed a divorce both from science and from metaphysics and affirmed that theology was to be erected exclusively upon facts of immediate inner experience. "We are," say the Ritschlians, "to take our stand where Jesus took his stand, not upon logic, but upon the experience of the heart in its relation to God." [19] I have pointed out that this strategic move, instead of delivering theology from science, implies a surrender into the hands of psychology.[20]

The typical quotations which follow will serve to show both that metaphysics and scientific arguments are held to be insufficient, and that theologians seek to make themselves independent from scientific criticism in order to find a supposedly unshakable ground of belief in inner experience. I give the views not of professional philosophers, but of lead-

[19] In a recent book, *Die Religionspsychologische Methode in Religionswissenschaft und Theologie,* Professor Georg Wobbermin claims that theology and religion are invulnerable to science and to philosophy. By way of demonstration of this claim, he sets down an old fashioned dogma: "Affirmations of faith provide the highest possible ground for assurance in the objective existence of God, and for the truth of the Biblical revelation." I have reviewed that book at some length in the Social and Religious Psychology number of the *Psychological Bulletin,* Dec., 1915.

[20] *A Psychological Study of Religion;* Chapter XI — Theology and Psychology. See on "The Theology that is a Branch of Psychology," the *Harvard Theological Review* for Oct., 1916.

ers and teachers among Christian believers, for it is with them that we are concerned.

"I find, as time goes on," writes the Rev. Theodore Munger, "that the reasons for belief in immortality once held, while they do not wholly give way, yield to personal experience of it. One reason of this change is that as immortality belongs to the order of existence — a natural and not a miraculous fact — it must be realized in one's own experience, like every other truth in human life — that is, it is revealed through life. While this is a growing feature in Christian consciousness, there are, in my own case, two unlike facts attending it that have not only strong weight of evidence, but great spiritual uplift and comfort. I can but name them.

"The first is drawn from the revelation of God in creation. The one purpose in creation from the first has been to produce man. Endless ages for production; a few years and he goes out of existence! The improbability of this is so great that it sweeps away all the difficulties that cluster about death. . . . The other fact is the consciousness of Christ. I do not refer to his authoritative word, nor to his resurrection, however it be interpreted, but to the spontaneous and natural way in which he assumed the continuance of life forever. It was never a question with him, and hence he said so little about it. He predicates immortality as naturally as a bird predicates flight when it feels its wings. It had its ground in his absolute consciousness of the fatherhood of God; if he is the Father, how can he suffer his children to go out of existence?

This seems to me to be the rock on which our hope of immortality is based." [21]

A professor of theology in one of the foremost Presbyterian schools of the United States is convinced that "our human personal immortality cannot be proved as a fact, compelling assent after the fashion of proofs in physical or even in purely intellectual matters." The arguments customarily adduced are well nigh "utterly futile." Wherefrom, then, shall the proof of immortality come? The professor's answer is: —

"Any soul must come to grasp this truth of immortality by the way of first realizing it as a truth of its own very self, its being, its own life. . . . The simple truth is that I must first have the reality of immortality as an assurance included in my consciousness of my own being and life." But yet, how am I to know immortality?

"As the truth of myself?" "In large measure, I must come to realize immortality as of myself by the presence consciously in me of those things I instinctively sense as eternal, the immortal things, the things that have natural congruousness with, and so suggest, the idea." . . . "There are things that the soul feels instinctively as eternal, immortal things. . . . The only way to have the sense of immortality within oneself is simply to live immortally. The soul must be kept clear — negatively — of the things of thought and life that are unfitted to immortality, and must cultivate and develop within itself positively the thoughts and dispositions and

[21] From a symposium published in the *Congregationalist*, Boston; 1904.

tastes and moods that are most naturally fitted to the thoughts and the sense of it.

"Put into any soul, any life, the things that made up the soul, the life, of Jesus Christ; let the humility, the purity, and the self-forgetting love, the devotion to the Father, that were in the soul of Christ, filling all his consciousness of himself and making up his life — let these things and their kind fill the conscious being of any man, and, in so far as this is done, he will tend to carry in himself the sense of his own Immortality." [22]

This is as full a statement as I have read of the meaning of "falling back upon inner experience." As this argument is now frequently met with in the religious press, and as it finds credence even among distinguished professors of theology, it deserves critical consideration. It will be sufficient for our purpose to discuss the possible meaning of *the sense of one's own immortality*, which is said to be produced in those who "sense as eternal" the virtues of humility, purity, and self-forgetting love.

What are the characteristics of "the sense of immortality"? When we speak of feeling young or old, well or ill, we mean definite experiences marked, in the case of health, by clearness of sensation, quickness and vigor of motor response, relish for food, pleasant tone of consciousness, etc.; and, in the case of illness, by pain, motor sluggishness and unsteadiness, diminished appetite, general inertia, unpleasant tone of consciousness, etc. The expression "immortality feeling" can not mean in the passage

[22] Edward Everett Bacon: "The Argument for Immortality"; *The Outlook;* New York; June 29, 1912.

quoted any one or several of the ordinary experiences, some of which have just been named; for it designates an alleged unique, specific feeling. Let us admit for the sake of argument that such a feeling exists. There remains an insuperable difficulty, namely, the passage from the feeling itself to the conviction that it signifies the immortality of the individual experiencing it. For, of course, a feeling is in itself nothing but a subjective experience. If, when suffering from what is called a feeling of illness, I say that my body is not in good order, I *interpret* the particular feeling or feelings. This I am able to do correctly because of the frequent connections I have established between my feelings and my physiological condition. I have found, for instance, that when a certain feeling was present, I could not walk without fatigue, I could not make certain movements without pain, I did not desire food, and suffered if I ate. Furthermore, men of science have established by observations and experiments, similar correlations between certain feelings and the condition of certain organs of the body; correlations which in part have become known to the laity. Therefore I say now with confidence, when I have these feelings, "My body," or "this part of my body, is disordered." But my knowledge of the disorganization of the bodily machine is, of course, not the feeling of illness. The former might exist without the latter. A striking instance of this is provided by the pronounced sense of well-being experienced by sufferers from progressive paralysis.

Has correspondence ever been observed between

a specific feeling experienced in this life and the continuation after death of those possessing it? No one ever had the opportunity of observing that persons who had enjoyed the alleged feeling, or had practiced the virtues said to induce the feeling of immortality — humility, purity, self-forgetfulness, etc.— had actually survived death. As a matter of fact, no one (spiritualists perhaps excepted) pretends to have made this observation.

Any and every feeling, whatever name may be given to it, is incontrovertible in so far as the feeling itself, and no more, is affirmed. There is no contradicting one who merely affirms that he is joyful, or that he is sad; nor one who declares that he feels sixteen years old, provided he does not claim, in addition, that he has lived only that number of years. But if he passes from the feeling of youthfulness to the affirmation that he is sixteen years old, then his claim is open to verification. He may be asked to produce his reasons, not for the feeling, but for his interpretation of it. The theologians who write as our author does, do not seem to know that no particular feeling can of itself signify personal immortality.

The "inner experience" which, these theologians say, should and does convince of immortality is no other than a sense of the worth of human life and the realization that this life can be rationally and morally satisfactory only if the good, or the supremely good endures. Professor Bacon's argument is, therefore, at bottom, no more than a disguised statement of the moral argument.

CHAPTER VI

THE DEMONSTRATION OF MODERN IMMORTALITY BY DIRECT SENSORY EVIDENCE AND SCIENTIFIC INDUCTION

The primary belief in continuation possessed the incontrovertible validity belonging to facts of sensory experience. Because of the nature of its origin, the modern belief in fulfillment after death lacks this certainty, and the protracted efforts that have been made to gain for it metaphysical certitude have secured at best no more than a hope of its reality. Under these circumstances, it would have been strange indeed if in the present scientific age systematic efforts had not been made to lift the modern belief above the parlous state in which it was left by metaphysics. If a direct sensory demonstration or an inductive scientific proof could be secured, the modern belief would have gained the assurance it now lacks.

A recent widespread effort to provide such proof began a few decades ago and continues unabated to this day. I allude to the kind of researches seen at their best in the work of the "Society for Psychical Research." This may be regarded as the only new development in the history of the belief since the production of the metaphysical proofs.

The literature on psychical research has become

vast and intricate and a critical discussion of it would be so lengthy, and to most people so tedious, that I shall refer the reader to the original reports [1] and content myself with brief statements on three topics: the methods of research, the results so far secured, and the nature of the future life which the alleged evidence would disclose. For the sake of convenience I shall use "spirit" and "spirit communication" instead of "alleged spirit" and "alleged communication."

I. PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS

Spirit manifestations may be divided for convenience into two classes: the physical manifestations, such as movement of objects, production of noises or music, materialization of spirits, and the like; and the psychical manifestations, namely the production of ideas, feelings, desires or purposes, either in a "medium" used as a transmitter, or directly in the person with whom the spirit wishes to communicate.

The outcome of observations under partial scientific control that have been permitted by some mediums is now generally regarded as totally discrediting the spiritistic origin of the physical manifestations; and also, though less conclusively, as discrediting any interpretation involving other than ordinary physical powers. The case against these alleged manifestations was made only the more convincing by the last great claimant to supernormal power, Eusapia Palladino. This noted medium sub-

[1] *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.* (Twenty-seven volumes have already been issued.)

mitted to several investigations usually, however, under her own conditions or her conditions only slightly altered. The most thorough of these investigations was carried out between 1905 and 1907 under the auspices of the *Institut Général Psychologique.*[2] In this investigation a number of well-known scientists participated, notably the physicists Curie and d'Arsonval.

These experiments discovered not only a number of tricks, but also Palladino's rooted aversion to really scientific control and the impotency to which she is reduced when she submits to conditions satisfactory to the investigators. One of the interesting discoveries of this committee was made by means of a devise recording, unknown to the medium, the weight of the chair in which she sat during the table-levitation performances. It was found that whenever the two feet of the table on her side, or three, or all four feet of the table were lifted, there was an increase in her weight, corresponding to the weight of the table. And whenever the two feet opposite the end at which Eusapia was seated were lifted, the apparatus recorded a decrease in her weight; i. e., just what would be expected on the supposition that she pressed upon the near end of the table in order to cause the raising of the opposite end.

Her success in deflecting "without contact" a delicate balance gave way to complete failure when it was protected in various ways devised for the pur-

[2] Dr. Jules Courtier: *Rapport sur les Séances d'Eusapia Palladino.* Published by the *Institut Général Psychologique;* Paris; Vol. VIII, 1908. Pages 415–518.

pose. It was, moreover, discovered that a long hair and a pin were among the apparatus apparently required for her demonstrations.

That cheating is a conspicuous feature of her performances is recognized not only by the French Committee, but by all those who have had her under observation. The French Report admits, nevertheless, the possibility of the possession by Palladino of an unknown power. It is argued that deception in a medium does not preclude the possession of supernormal power. One may in principle agree with William James that it is "dramatically impossible that the swindling should not have accreted around some originally genuine nucleus," [3] provided it be admitted that fraudulent performances of one kind may have accreted around genuine phenomena of another kind. The wonders of the early mesmerizers may, for instance, have been the starting point for the production of other, never genuinely produced performances; or, the first, the honest performance may have been a trance, a vision, a cure which established a reputation for wonder-working. May we not admit that in an effort to maintain that reputation, persons have tried to cause objects to move without touching them? That is a power attributed fairly commonly to magic. And, failing in this, may not some of these would-be magicians prefer deception to renunciation? A full knowledge of the beginning of the career of mediums would solve this problem.

It cannot be denied that deception in a medium

[3] "Confidences of a Psychical Researcher"; *American Magazine;* October, 1909.

does not of itself preclude the possession of supernormal power. Yet, there may be realized a combination of frequency of deception, kinds of performance, and nature of the required conditions which would decrease to the vanishing point the probability of the presence in the medium of a supernormal force. That combination is realized, I think, in the case of Palladino. When before the French investigators she operated under the following conditions:—

The room in which the experiments were made was darkened, and, at times, quite dark. The darker the room, we are told, the more remarkable the performance. The control of the medium's hands was theoretically secured by two persons, each holding one of hers; but in practice she insisted, when she chose, upon the right to place her hands on those of the controllers; and even, at times, to give them gentle taps instead of remaining in contact with them. Corresponding conditions existed as to the control of her feet. During the sittings her hands were ever in motion, carrying with them those of the controllers. She refused to have pieces of tape seven centimeters long sewed between her sleeves and those of the controllers. She refused to allow observers to be stationed in the room elsewhere than around the table. After the first instantaneous photograph had been taken by flashlight, she refused to permit any to be taken without warning, on the ground that it caused her a painful shock. She did not propose to wear dark glasses, but expressed her willingness to give the signal herself, "*fuoco*"!

Together with these facts must be weighed two

important considerations: the performances in which she was not caught at tricks are of the same sort as those in which she was; and every one of the conditions she maintained against the wish of the investigators favors deception. Why must there be a cabinet closed in front by a curtain? Why must the stand, the clay, and other objects be within reach of her hands or feet? Why the poor illumination? Why was she not willing to suffer the annoyance of an unexpected flash of light and of a safe control of her hands and feet at least during certain sittings or parts of sittings, when the alleged power was with her? Were she occasionally honest, she might, it seems, occasionally dispense with some or all of these suspicious circumstances.

That certain conditions must be observed in order to make possible the manifestation of any power is not disputed. But why is it that the required conditions are here precisely those that would give the medium a chance of cheating — of, for instance, surreptitiously freeing her hands and feet, were she to need their assistance? Either it is because every one of her productions is a trick, or that she is so uncertain of the availability of her supernormal power or so frequently averse to using it that she is prepared in every instance to work by prestidigitation, should she prefer or find it necessary to do so. But, as she has, so far as I am aware, insisted from the beginning upon these conditions, and as other mediums have always done likewise, there is the strongest presumption against the second supposition.

We need not be deterred from a negative conclu-

sion by the sitters' declaration that they cannot possibly understand how, in light sufficient for observation and with her hands and feet under control, Palladino could by normal means accomplish certain of the things they have seen her do. Photography shows how unable they were to realize what was going on. In the only photograph taken without warning, Eusapia is actually lifting the table with her hands, while the controllers have theirs upon hers; and yet they were not aware of her action. In another photograph, the stand they thought they had seen floating freely in the air appears supported on the medium's neck and head. Their judgment as to the sufficiency of light and the occupation of the medium's hands while under control can evidently not be relied upon.

What is true of Palladino is true in substance of all mediums so far as the production of physical phenomena is concerned. The physical manifestations with which mediums have entertained and puzzled the world do not point to the existence of spirits, or even in my opinion to supernormal powers of any sort.[4]

II. PSYCHICAL MANIFESTATIONS

The conclusion to be drawn from the mass of evidence accumulated during the last twenty-five years as to the origin of the psychical manifestations, the chief of which are the "messages" pur-

[4] Palladino's public career came to an end in New York in 1910, when, after certain *séances* at the house of Prof. Herbert Lord of Columbia University, her clever practices were heartlessly exposed. Readers who wish to know what

porting to come from disincarnate spirits, is much less definite than in the case of the physical manifestations. The most famous of the living spirit-mediums is doubtless Mrs. Piper of Boston. No other medium has been so carefully and so long studied by so many able investigators, and none has contributed so much that seems beyond the ingenuity of any one to explain. Accounts of her *séances* fill many thousand pages of the Proceedings. The stage-setting of these *séances* is somewhat complicated. The medium passes into a trance and speaks or writes, automatically, messages purporting to come from some spirit; but this communicating spirit is introduced and superintended by a familiar spirit called the "control." Mrs. Piper's reputation for honesty has never been shaken.

Instead of entering into a critical analysis of Mrs. Piper's utterances,[5] I shall devote the space at my disposal to the more decisive experiments in cross-correspondences, the latest and most promising method for arriving at a settlement of the question of survival after death. When a medium makes a statement descriptive of some past event, and it is left to the sitter to prove that neither he nor the

can be seen at Palladino's *séances* by observers concealed in a bureau provided with a peephole, or flat on the floor under the table, should read *Collier's Weekly,* May 14, 1910; and the *New York Times,* May 12, and following numbers.

[5] See the *Proceedings* of the English and the American S. P. R. Several years ago I examined critically in "Empirical Data on Immortality," *International Journal of Ethics,* 1903, XIV, pages 90–105, a voluminous report of Dr. Hyslop upon a number of sittings given him by Mrs. Piper.

medium, nor perhaps any one living, ever had knowledge of that event, the task is, to say the least, very difficult; in fact it is usually quite impossible of performance, for memory is not to be relied upon. Cross-correspondence is unfortunately not free from this difficulty. The theory is that if several persons receive messages which when taken singly have no meaning, but make sense when put together, we should have to admit — on the supposition that fraud is excluded — that those messages have been suggested to the percipients by some mind. If, moreover, the thing communicated does not seem to have been possibly within the knowledge of any one of the percipients; and if it is discovered that some dead person possessed that knowledge when on earth; and, finally, if that person is mentioned by name as the communicator in one or several of the unintelligible parts of the message, then, at least a strong presumption in favor of the existence of that spirit would have been produced.

The experiments in cross-correspondence (Proc. vols. XX–XXVII) have been conducted chiefly through three English ladies, one of them residing in India, and Mrs. Piper. Chance coincidence is absolutely insufficient to account for the results secured, and collusion is rejected by all those who know something of these persons and of the conditions of the tests. There is apparently no escape from the conclusion reached by that acute critic and tenacious skeptic, Frank Podmore: "The automatists unquestionably show that they possess information which would not have reached their conscious-

ness by normal means." [6] Whether the explanation of these mysterious cross-correspondences will be found in telepathy acting at any distance, taken together with the well-known fact of the reappearance in certain mental states (in trance-consciousness, for instance) of things once known but long forgotten, even of things of which we never had more than an imperfect knowledge and should at no time have been able to reproduce correctly, remains for future investigations to disclose. As long as we can affirm with Podmore that " the trance personalities have never told us anything which was not probably within the knowledge of some living person," telepathy will appear the more plausible and the less revolutionary hypothesis. But who will venture to formulate the test which will mark particular messages as not within the " possibly known " to some one living anywhere on the surface of the globe?

The telepathic hypothesis of spirit-message receives support from the vacuous nature of the communications made by the alleged spirits regarding their state and the circumstances of their existence. They have been fairly loquacious; yet not any of them, not even those from whom much could have been expected, have revealed anything at all. More significant still than the insignificance of the remarks of these alleged spirits concerning the other life, is their pertinacious effort to avoid answering the many and pointed questions addressed

[6] *The New Spiritualism;* page 302. For a *résumé* of the most striking cross-correspondences, see pages 237–276.

to them on that subject. From Richard Hodgson, the late secretary of the Society, nothing enlightening has been learned, despite his haste in announcing his existence. For several years after his death, Mrs. Piper scarcely held a sitting without some manifestation of what professed to be Hodgson's spirit. He talked abundantly of trifling incidents, presumably for the purpose of establishing his identity; but when questioned concerning the circumstances of his existence, he either driveled or excused himself clumsily and departed. Frederick Myers and Wm. James have been equally disappointing.

It has been urged that the spirits may find it difficult to work with the muscular mechanism of the medium; a disincarnate soul may be inefficient in the matter of bodily control. He may also be for a time not fully conscious and muddled. The fact is, however, that they do communicate a great many things; it takes volumes to record their utterances! The difficulties are apparently of such a peculiar nature that nothing concerning the other life, and only things that have taken place on this earth, transpire. None of the hypotheses offered account for this puzzling aspect of the communications, not even the latest suggestion which would shift the blame from the spirit to the medium. Here we are asked to admit that because of the peculiar condition of spirit-existence, the spirit's mental content is transmitted whole to the medium; in a lump, as it were; instead of coming out in the organized and selected form which is insured by nor-

mal speech.[7] Were it so, it would be no wonder should the medium get confused, contradict himself, and speak irrelevantly. But why, when he knows that the sitter seeks information on things above, does the medium not succeed once in a while in choosing, in the total consciousness of the spirit, something which would gratify the sitter's curiosity; why are the things picked out always meaningless, ridiculous or trifling? To this pertinent question no satisfactory answer has ever been given. The limitation of the knowledge of the alleged spirits to earthly facts points to an earthly origin of the medium's information.

It is sometimes supposed that all the prominent researchers have come to accept spirit survival. This is far from true. Henry Sidgwick, one of the most earnest and influential of the founders of the S. P. R., ready enough though he was to believe, died, according to the report of his friend, Wm. James, " in the same identical state of doubt and of balance in which he started." [8] And Wm. James himself, who is often mentioned as an out and out believer in spiritism, wrote not long before his death, " For 25 years I have been in touch with the literature of Psychical Research, and I have been acquainted with numerous researchers. . . . Yet I am theoretically no further than I was at the beginning." [9] He maintained consistently throughout his life an attitude of suspended judgment regarding the

[7] James Hyslop: *Psychical Research and Survival;* 1913. Page 126. See also pages 129, 131.

[8] *American Magazine,* October, 1909.

[9] *Loc. cit.*

"proofs" of spirit existence. Both his open mindedness and his negative attitude as to the results, appear clearly in his comments on certain sittings Mrs. Piper gave him, in which his lately deceased friend Richard Hodgson was supposed to have communicated, "I therefore repeat that if ever our growing familiarity with these phenomena should tend more and more to corroborate the hypothesis that 'spirits' play some part in their production, I shall be quite ready to undeafen my ears, and to revoke the negative conclusions of this limited report." [10]

Whether the results of the S. P. R. are regarded as proving survival or not, it must be admitted that no amount of ingenuity in explanation and no optimism can hide the unattractiveness of

[10] *Proc.;* Vol. XXIII; 1909; page 29.

It may be added that James did not desire the demonstration of the spiritistic hypothesis. He never accepted the "soul" theory, in part for lack of evidence and in part because he could not make any use of the notion of a simple, permanent essence. There was no room in his philosophy for the survival after death of individual souls. These two negations — no soul and the loss of personal identity after death — were early established in the mind of the American philosopher and never afterwards given up. And yet, he was far from believing that death ends all. Almost as early as his denial of a soul, one finds him surmising, if not affirming, that although man does not preserve his identity beyond death, he becomes at death in some way an immortal partaker in a superhuman consciousness. The idea of a "sea of consciousness" in which we are somehow plunged, was one of James's fundamental beliefs, or rather, to use his own term, "overbeliefs." See the Appendix on *Wm. James and Immortality.*

The best history of mediumship is Frank Podmore's *Modern Spiritualism: A History and a Criticism,* 2 vols.; London; Methuen & Co. Brought up to date in *The Newer Spiritualism;* New York; Henry Holt & Company; 1911.

the glimpses that may have been caught of the other life; there is no hint in these glimpses of any glorification; nor, for that matter, of any retribution. That other world would come much closer to a realization of the primary than of the modern conception of continuation. The disincarnate souls appear on the whole as enfeebled and inefficient replica of earthly beings. This is not the kind of continuation which the modern world desires; it lacks the essential features of the Christian conception of immortality.

III. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The numerous alleged apparitions of persons once on earth can have demonstrative value only if the hypothesis of hallucination is excluded, and if, besides, sufficient proof is given of the identity of the ghost. Should we admit that these conditions have been realized in the case of Christ, the immortality of man would not thereby have been established, since, according to orthodox Christianity, Christ was human only by his mother. The rising from the dead of a divine being could not prove that mere man will conquer death. In good logic, only disbelievers in the supernatural birth, who nevertheless accept the historical records of Christ's resurrection as convincing, may rely upon him as a witness of the possibility of their own immortality.

As a matter of fact, Christians who have embraced the unitarian heresy, and such Christians are now found in all our churches, usually profess doubt as to the sufficiency of the records. And contemporary theologians are wont to speak of Christ's resurrec-

tion as warranting a hope of immortality and no more. Professor Wm. A. Brown of Union Theological Seminary (New York) concludes his consideration of immortality by this affirmation, "The most that we can hope to prove by testimony is that something happened in the past."[11]

The deeper influence of Christ upon the belief in immortality is after all not due to his alleged resurrection but to his life and to his own belief in human immortality. When he convinces men of immortality, it is not so much because they believe he rose from the dead, as because he is thought to have taught resurrection and because he lived, so at least it seems to them, as an immortal being would live. The reported fact of the resurrection is itself, one may hold, a consequence of the intensity to which the motives for the belief in fulfillment after death had been stimulated by the commanding personality of the founder of Christianity. For the rest, the influence of the belief in the resurrection is probably enormously exaggerated. It is not Christ who brought into the world the hope of immortality; for not only the hope, but the belief had at the beginning of our era already become the possession of many in Palestine as well as elsewhere.

The outcome of the last two chapters is that the metaphysical proofs of immortality are admittedly inadequate; that the ground of that belief when it is based on "inner experience" is really the naïve conviction that human life at its best is too precious

[11] *The Christian Hope: A Study of the Doctrine of Immortality;* Scribner; 1912. Page 179.

to end with death, and that survival is demanded for the gratification of ideal desires; and finally that the effort to prove modern immortality by the methods of science has so far remained inconclusive.

PART II

STATISTICAL STUDY OF THE BELIEF IN A PERSONAL GOD AND IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY IN THE UNITED STATES

CRITICAL INTRODUCTORY REMARKS UPON RECENT SYMPOSIA AND STATISTICAL INVESTIGATIONS

In the present status of religion and of philosophy, there is only one fundamentally significant classification of the various conceptions of God. On the one side must be placed the conceptions that are consistent with the means of worship common to all the religions, original Buddhism and Comtism excepted; on the other, those that are not. Every book of worship at present in use implies a Being in direct affective and intellectual relation with his worshipers; a Being, therefore, endowed with will, feeling, and intelligence. The surrender of that conception would mean either the disappearance or the radical transformation of practically all the religions known to history.

Who would recognize the Christian religion, either Protestant or Roman Catholic, were all traces of direct communication with the Divinity now indicated in its liturgies to be removed? The Christian God and the unknowable First Cause of Spencer, or the impassible Absolute of most contemporary philosophers, are essentially different conceptions which can be used interchangeably neither in religion nor in philosophy.[1]

[1] See the preface of this book for some remarks concerning the meanings of the term "God."

I have called those beings who hold the direct personal relations with man characteristic of the worship of the historical religions, "personal gods." It is with gods of that description only that we are concerned in this volume.

The expression "personal immortality" is usually understood to mean the continuation after death of the conscious individual and implies the continuation of the sense of one's identity. Any conception which does not include this sense of identity is not the one intended here.[2]

The beliefs in a personal God and in personal immortality are regarded as cardinal tenets of Christianity, and, many would hold, of every possible religion. Yet, in the absence of any reliable knowledge, the widest divergence of opinion exists regarding their prevalence in Christian countries. Pulpit orators assert, for instance, that scientists and philosophers, with few exceptions, share with them the "fundamentals" of the Christian faith. On the other hand, "free thinkers" declare that no man of science can accept the Christian beliefs; and that, as to the clergy, they are mostly dissemblers. One of my correspondents, a chemist, adds to a declaration of belief in God and immortality, "You will find that 90 per cent. of the chemists of this country believe as I do." But another chemist, a disbeliever, informs me that no more than 40 per cent. of his brother chemists accept these two beliefs. If men of science accustomed to accuracy in

[2] For the sake of brevity, I shall in the sequel omit usually the adjective "personal," both with reference to God and to immortality.

the gathering and weighing of evidence, diverge to that extent when speaking of their own profession, what reliance can be placed upon the opinion of those who lack those advantages?

Although valuable statistics on almost every possible subject have been compiled, none really significant have been attempted regarding the beliefs in which we are interested. Is it because there would be no gain in definite knowledge? Who would venture that assertion? It is rather the old desire to protect "holy things" from too close scrutiny, and also the more or less unconscious antagonism of those interested in the maintenance of the *status quo* in religion that have stood in the way of those who might have been disposed to face the difficulties of a statistical investigation of religious convictions.

It has seemed to me desirable on general theoretical ground, as well as for reasons of practical importance to religion, to add to the study of the origins of the beliefs in immortality presented in this book, and to the study of the origins of gods set forth in a preceding volume, a statistical and psychological inquiry into the present status of these beliefs among us. Studies of origin, when not brought into comparison with present conditions, lose much of their import. If a knowledge of the past is necessary to a full understanding of the present, acquaintance with the living present is no less indispensable to a complete understanding of the past.

Limited in its scope as it is, the present research will, nevertheless, I hope, be found worthy of attention not only by the students of religion, but also by

those interested in the possibilities of the statistical method. The sociologist speaks freely of development and of progress, but he has measured only material changes. He may state with sufficient precision changes in the wealth of a nation and in church membership; but he cannot express definitely the alterations that have taken place in the conceptions and convictions of men. For instance, there exists no information that would make possible a reliable statistical comparison of the religious ideas and beliefs of the Europe of the beginning of the last century with those of the present. And yet, changes in conceptions and convictions are more indicative than wealth of profound social transformations. Statistics of belief, similarly computed at different periods, would provide a measure of some of the changes that take place in the moral life of a given population. The influence upon religious beliefs of general intellectual ability and of knowledge of definite kinds could also be ascertained, did we but possess statistics established separately for groups of men differing in these respects. Recent researches have shown that problems seemingly as difficult can be solved by the statistical method.[3]

To religion itself, the significance of an exact knowledge of the present trend of fundamental beliefs could not easily be overstated. It is necessary to religious progress that what passes in the souls of our contemporaries should come to light; for, in

[3] I allude to the work of James McKeen Cattell, Karl Pearson, Edward Thorndike, Dr. James Woods, and others, on heredity and on the conditions productive of insanity, of genius, of high intellectual ability, etc.

order to fulfill effectively their mission, religious teachers must know the needs of men, their hopes, beliefs, and unbeliefs. It is, furthermore, essential to intellectual and moral advance that the beliefs that come into existence should have free play. Antagonistic beliefs must have the chance of proving their worth in open contest. In this way, scientific theories are tested; and in this way also religious and ethical conceptions should be tried. But a fair struggle cannot take place when people are dissuaded from seeking knowledge, or when knowledge is hidden.

A few years ago I began, at first rather tentatively, an attempt to determine scientifically the presence in particular classes of persons, of the beliefs in God and immortality. In the earlier investigations, I aimed at the same time at securing information as intimate as possible on certain aspects of religious life. The groups chosen for study were American students, scientists, historians, sociologists, psychologists, and philosophers. The choice of these groups was determined chiefly by the fact that these men, because of their intelligence, habits of reflection, and knowledge, may be regarded as in the vanguard of progress; their opinions represent probably the public opinion of to-morrow. I was also attracted to these classes by the possibility they afforded of correlating belief and unbelief with the kind of knowledge, possessed by the believer or unbeliever, and with the possession of certain traits upon which depend success in intellectual and other pursuits. The existence of authoritative lists of the persons belonging to these several groups was

also a circumstance of considerable advantage to me.

Before presenting the results secured, I should like to offer some critical comments on the kind of statistical inquiries and the symposia which have so far taken the place of scientific statistics.

Critical Remarks upon Recent Symposia and Statistical Investigations.—The past fifteen years have seen the publication of many symposia and statistical inquiries on God and immortality.[4] Most of the symposia are mere collections of edifying testimonies possessing no statistical value whatsoever. Nearly all of them produce upon the average reader the impression of a more or less universal acceptance of the beliefs in behalf of which they speak. Publish two hundred attestations of a particular opinion upon any question, gathered from among a population of one million persons, and the great majority of the readers will not be able to resist the belief that that opinion is the dominant one in the population to which these two hundred persons belong. Whereas it is theoretically possible that every one of the 999,800 silent ones hold another opinion.

[4] Clara Spalding Ellis: *What's Next? Or Shall a Man Live Again?* Richard G. Badger; Boston.

Robert J. Thompson: *The Proof of Life after Death; A Twentieth Century Symposium:* Chicago, 1902.

E. D. Adams: *This Life and the Next; Impressions and Thoughts of Notable Men and Women from Plato to Ruskin:* London; 1902.

Samuel J. Barrows: *Science and Immortality; The Christian Register Symposium Revised and Enlarged:* Boston; Geo. H. Ellis; 1887.

Arthur H. Tabrum: *Religious Beliefs of Scientists; A Reply to a Challenge by the Rationalistic Press Association of Great Britain:* Hunter and Longhurst; London; 1913 (140 letters from English scientists).

What, for instance, is the significance of the two hundred testimonies of Christian belief gathered by Clara Spalding Ellis — the largest collection of the kind with which I am acquainted? Two hundred voices belonging to several generations of people of many nationalities, is one voice in a million. They belong, it is true, to the upper classes. Let us say, then, that they represent one person in ten thousand; or even, if you please, one in one thousand. What are the opinions of the nine hundred and ninety-nine others?

To such illusion produced by symposia is usually added deception — unintentional, to be sure — of considerable importance. Because of insufficient definition of the terms upon which the meaning of the testimonies turns, the testifiers are understood to support opinions which frequently are not theirs. A recent volume entitled *Religious Beliefs of Scientists* provides a notable illustration of this. The book is an attempt " to ascertain the truth or falsity of certain assertions made by Freethinkers and Agnostics, and other opponents of religion." Here are two of these assertions: " It is extremely doubtful whether any scientist or philosopher really holds the doctrine of a personal God "; " Beyond all question the higher culture of America is rationalistic from New York to California." These are reckless assertions, but our present concern is with the attempt of the author of the book mentioned to prove them false, and not with their reliability. He addressed to a number of scientists, nearly all British, these two questions:

" Is there any real conflict between the facts of

science and the fundamentals of Christianity?" "Has it been your experience to find men of science irreligious and anti-Christian?"

The one hundred and forty scientists who answered are nearly all men past middle life, many are very old, and quite a number are now dead. They do not therefore represent the beliefs of the rising, but of the passing generation of English men of science.

The significance of this inquiry turns upon the meaning attached to the expression "the fundamentals of Christianity." The author does not define it; he does not even ask his correspondents to say what meaning they ascribe to that expression. As a matter of fact, very few have thought it necessary to be explicit. When they affirm, of themselves or of others, a "deeply religious" disposition, one very properly wonders whether to understand accessibility to awe and reverence, which, we are told on every hand are "the fundamental religious emotions"; or whether to suppose that, in addition to these emotions shared by all pagans with Christians, these persons hold as essential to salvation a belief in the Apostles' and Nicean creeds.

That great men of science should have been content to express themselves in terms so absurdly indefinite, would be incredible if one did not know that it is still a widespread habit not to think about religion; and that, should you have transgressed this rule, you are expected to hold your peace, or to speak with so much discretion that the sway of the tenets you now disbelieve may remain unshaken.

"I am not able to write you at length," says Lord Rayleigh, "but I may say that in my opinion true

Science and true Religion neither are, nor could be opposed." Sir William Ramsey, James Ward, and dozens of others, write just as unexplicitly. The former hold that "between the essential truth of Christianity and the established facts of Science there is no real antagonism"; and the latter is of the opinion that "there is not and never can be any opposition between Science and Religion, any more than there can be any between Grammar and Religion." But neither of these men says what he means by "religion," or by the "essential truth of Christianity"; and yet it is well known that the widest divergences of views exist regarding the truths essential to Christianity.

The distinguished psychologist, Professor G. F. Stout, is an exception to the rule. He knows that in answering the queries of Mr. Tabrum, the meaning of "essentials of Christianity" must be explicitly stated under penalty of utter confusion. He writes, "I should also agree in a sense that there is no antagonism between the established facts of Science and the fundamental teachings of Christianity, but I should define 'fundamental teachings of Christianity' as those elements of Christian doctrine which have given Christianity its influence for good in the world. What are these?" and here he stops. Professor Stout's published writings warrant, it appears to me, the statement that the influence he acknowledges is essentially independent of inspiration, revelation, the divinity [5] of Christ, and even of the existence of a

[5] I use these words in their historical, doctrinal meaning, not in the sense which would make every man "inspired" and "divine."

benevolent God who hears and may answer man's desires and supplications. Nevertheless, the majority of the readers of that book will probably put Professor Stout on Tabrum's side of the controversy.

This book, worthless to one desiring to know what English scientists really believe, is useful as a demonstration of the ambiguities tolerated in religious matters, not only by the muddle headed and ignorant, but even by acute minds trained in the accurate methods of science.

With one exception, the researches in statistical form upon Immortality and other religious beliefs [6] are completely meaningless when considered as statistics. One of these will serve the purpose of bringing out the essential conditions to be fulfilled by a valid statistical inquiry in this field.

In *The Religion of One Hundred and Twenty-Six College Students* are to be found tables purporting to give information upon the number of students of a certain college who pray, attend church, believe in immortality, and upon other related topics. It appears, in particular, that one hundred students pray and that twenty-six do not. We knew already that

[6] F. C. S. Schiller: "The Answers to the American Branch's Questionnaire regarding Human Sentiment as to a Future Life," *Proc. of the Soc. for Psychical Research;* Part 49; 1904. Vol. XVIII; pages 416–450. Reproduced in substance in *Humanism;* London; Macmillan; 1903.

Morse and Allen: "The Religion of One Hundred and Twenty-six College Students": *Journal of Religious Psychology;* 1913; Vol. VII; pages 175–194.

Simon Spidle: "The Belief in Immortality": *Journal of Religious Psychology;* 1912; Vol. V; pages 5–51.

Colin A. Scott: "Old Age and Death": *American Journal of Psychology;* 1890; Vol. VIII.

many American students pray; what more do we know now? Nothing more, since we are left in the dark concerning over two-thirds (274) of the students who received the questions and left them unanswered. Should these be dominantly non-praying persons, the religious status of the college would be altogether different from what the incomplete statistics offered us seem to indicate. The facts gathered have no statistical value whatsoever. In order to be valid, a statistical investigation must include every member or nearly every member of the whole group under study, or of a definite and not too small fraction of it. In the latter case, the selection must be according to chance.[7]

[7] The exception to which I referred above, is the inquiry of the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research. Even that investigation is not free from objection since the *Questionnaire* was "quite random and unsystematic," and since it was answered by much less than one third of those to whom it was addressed directly or through its publication in various journals. As it was circulated chiefly by the members of the Society for Psychical Research and in spiritualistic circles (several spiritualistic journals reprinted the questions), the reported number of believers is obviously unduly large. This, Dr. Schiller himself admits. The investigation is nevertheless very far from worthless; the methodological defect influences, in fact, only the results secured by the first question (Would you prefer to live after death or not?). The five other questions are addressed to those who have answered the first. Now, all, or nearly all of those who answered the first answered also the last five questions. Thus, while this inquiry contributes nothing definite to the general statistics of belief in immortality, it provides valid statistical information upon the persons who answered its first question. In addition, it offers a rich material on the psychology of belief. As the only results published so far refer to the fourth and sixth questions, this is not the place to speak of them.

Dr. Schiller, who prepared the report alluded to, is not to be held responsible for the conduct of the investigation. The *Questionnaire* (see below) was issued from the United States by Dr. Richard Hodgson, at the time Secretary of the Society.

INQUIRY INTO HUMAN SENTIMENT WITH REGARD TO A FUTURE LIFE

I. Would you prefer (*a*) to live after "death" or (*b*) not?

II. (*a*) If I. (*a*), do you desire a future life whatever the conditions might be?

(*b*) If not, what would have to be its character to make the prospect seem tolerable? Would you, e. g., be content with a life more or less like your present life?

(*c*) Can you say what elements in life (if any) are felt by you to call for its perpetuity?

III. Can you state *why* you feel in this way, as regards questions I. and II.?

IV. Do you NOW feel the question of a future life to be of urgent importance to your mental comfort?

V. Have your feelings on questions I., II. and IV. undergone change? If so, when and in what ways?

VI. (*a*) Would you like to *know for certain* about the future life, or (*b*) would you prefer to leave it a *matter of faith?*

CHAPTER VII

INVESTIGATION A: THE BELIEF IN GOD AMONG AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

If fifty years ago American students had been asked to formulate their beliefs, I surmise that they would have answered, with uniformity and assurance, in the terms of the Catechisms then in use. They would have affirmed, for instance, a belief in the one true God, Creator of heaven and earth, in whom dwell three persons of one substance, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. How is it to-day? Official creeds and articles of faith have remained substantially unchanged, and the clergy are still expected to teach the tenets of their religion. What is the faith of the "flower of the rising generation"?

A few years ago I drew up four questions, and succeeded in having them answered by all the students of a number of classes belonging to non-technical departments of nine colleges of high rank, and by two classes (seventy-eight answers) of a normal school. Nearly one thousand answers were received, 97 per cent. of which are from students between eighteen and twenty years of age. This number of answers is small, yet their significance is considerable. With obvious limitations, they provide reliable information as to the state of mind of students in non-technical college departments regarding the Christian

conception of God. These data have special value because *every student* in the class when the *questionnaire* was distributed, answered.[1]

1 The *Questionnaire* (see below) was distributed in the class room by the instructor in psychology, or, less frequently, in philosophy, who had been directed to read to the class the remarks printed as introduction to the questions, and warned against discussing them. The students were then allowed the remainder of the class-period to formulate their answers. In order to encourage complete freedom of expression, signatures were not requested.

Nine hundred and twenty-seven answers were received (289 from men and 638 from women) from nine colleges and 78 from one normal school. The tabulation was already completed when it occurred to me that for the sake of greater homogeneity the answers from the normal school had better been omitted. They include a larger proportion of believers than the others. I secured the services of instructors in psychology and philosophy merely because of my acquaintance with them, and of their interest in the investigation which should not, however, be thought to reflect in a special way their teaching, for the students were all in their first year of psychology or philosophy, and nearly all of them in their first semester. Any one familiar with what is taught in the first semester of an elementary course in these branches will know that the opinion of the students on the subject of this investigation is not likely to have been directly affected by their professors. Their ingenuousness with regard to any philosophical knowledge appears to me demonstrated by the papers themselves. Should further doubts remain concerning this point, they will be removed by the outcome of Investigation B, in which every student of one college took part, and which is in substantial agreement with the result of Investigation A.

A wider and more accurate representative value might be claimed for this inquiry if each participating college were represented in it by a number of answers proportional to the number of its students. Interesting additional knowledge would have been gained if the colleges had been classified according to their academic standards and religious interests, and the answers from each had been correlated with these features. Again, information of considerable importance

I. TYPICAL ANSWERS, IN EXTENSO

Before presenting the results of this inquiry in statistical form, I shall quote *in extenso* a number of typical answers [2] with the purpose of illustrating the diverse points of views and the temper of these stu-

would have been secured if entering classes could have been compared with senior classes. These and other inquiries would be well worth the trouble they would entail, but they will I fear become practicable only when the existing traditional opposition, passive when not active, to the search for definite information regarding religious beliefs has considerably weakened.

If the scope of this investigation is narrow, it is not through lack of desire on my part to make it broader. Circumstances imposed narrow limitations as a condition of success.

QUESTIONNAIRE UPON THE BELIEF IN GOD

The purpose of the following questions is to find out what are your real beliefs concerning God. We know well enough what people are supposed to believe, but we have little opportunity of finding out what they actually believe.

Not what one should or would like to believe, but what one really believes, is asked for in these questions.

Be as clear and definite as you can be without going beyond the truth, but do not refuse to answer because you cannot be otherwise than indefinite. The very lack of definiteness is a fact well worth ascertaining. The answers need not be signed, but the approximate age is desired.

1. Do you think of God as a personal or impersonal being?

2. What difference do you make between a personal and an impersonal being?

3. Describe as fully as you can how, under what image, or images, you think of God. Distinguish here between what in your description is for you merely an image, a form of speech, and what is the reality.

4. What difference would the non-existence of God make in your daily life?

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[2] Except for abbreviations, these answers are published here as they were written. The numbers designate the questions to which the quotations refer.

dents. With one exception, every quotation is representative of a large number of others of the same type, if not of the same quality. No student of human nature will complain of the number of these documents. He will rather find a keen interest in observing the amazingly different ways in which persons in similar situations think and feel. Frequently they occupy opposite positions on questions declared by the Christian church to be matters of salvation or damnation. And yet, these young people are receiving the same teaching, they work and play together; and, for the most part, do not give any indication in their conduct of these alleged life-and-death differences.

The reader interested in religious education should find the following pages particularly enlightening. Vigorous efforts are being made in the United States to standardize educational methods, and protests inspired by the danger of uniformity have already been heard. This investigation will show that religion is running an opposite danger. Stupendous ignorance is the price paid by our youth for the absence of teaching and guidance. The situation cannot be improved until traditional and no longer teachable beliefs have been replaced in the confidence of public opinion by others in agreement with modern knowledge.

It will be observed that an opportunity was given the respondents to define the meaning they ascribed to the term "personal" as applied to God. This seemed wiser than for me to provide a definition. Their efforts to define that expression are most suggestive.

I should perhaps add, by way of partial explanation of the intellectual *naïveté* and other defects of several of these answers, that the writers were given little more than a half hour during which to produce something like photographs of the content of their mind with regard to one of the most difficult subjects possible.

I. *A woman, age 19.*— I begin with the naïve and rather commonplace statement of a person who feels keenly the need for affection and moral support.

"1. God is a very personal being because he always listens and answers, and is . . . interested in us.

"3. Under no image or images do I think of God. He exists everywhere, was heard as a 'still, small voice,' and seen as a dove, but I do not think of him as such. Except as he was revealed in his son, Jesus Christ, I have no image of God in my mind. . . . I know he is not like anything I have ever seen. How do I think of God? As a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; in him dwell wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. I think of God as the maker of this whole world, of every man, woman, and child in it. He knows the past, present, and future. I think of him as the ruler of the lives of each of us. And out of his inexhaustible love, he is deeply interested in every person on this earth. Therefore we can pray to him, asking and receiving what is good for us. He is like a human father, but divine.

"4. If I did not believe that there is a God, if this life was all (for the belief in God brings with it a

belief in a world to come), I think my life would be a very unhappy one. In that case one might as well enjoy himself as much as possible here. . . . I certainly would do what pleases me most.

"It would be almost unbearable to part from one's friends if one did not hope ever to see them again."

II. *A woman, sophomore*, very different from the one just quoted.

"1. I do not believe in God. (This, of course, prevents my answering the first three questions.)

"4. I can remember when I gave up my last attempt to believe in God. The only difference I felt in my daily life when I gave up the belief was that I felt a greater sense of responsibility for my own conduct. I also felt more independent. I have not been able to shake off a slight feeling of contempt for the narrow bigotry and superstition of conventional beliefs which most people accept without allowing their reason to act."

III. *A woman, junior.*—The poetical, richly sensitive nature of this person makes a strong contrast with the hard self-reliance of the preceding one.

"1. I think of God as a personal being.

"2. The difference between a personal and an impersonal God to me is that a 'personal God' is interested in each human being . . . whereas an 'impersonal being' is a ruling law that sets the world in motion and allows natural forces once created to operate, with indifference on his part. The difference is, I think, that of a God who feels (though I suppose not with such violence as to disturb his perfect con-

trol) as contrasted with a God who knows no emotion, but is all reason and power.

"3. My conception of God, that is, the image I form of him, changes. Most of the time he is to me the spirit of life in the out-of-door world and then the feeling I have of him is of some strong force pushing up from the ground or in motion of some sort, very free and pure and joyous. I don't think I embody his force; I merely conceive of it as the spirit within the trees, grass, or what not, and in people the active impelling force that produces some special act of strength or beauty. God at such times is the lifting power of things, yet even then he is personal, a disembodied joy is the nearest I have ever gotten to a definition of him. At other times, when I am indoors, and cannot get into the buoyancy of this conception of God, when imagination is dull or I am depressed, I think of God in the image of a vast and understanding face, a face that is undefined except in the general impression of august might and sympathy. This is to me merely a symbol which I never think of as real. It comes as the consequence of human limitations and I take it as an expression of the sluggishness of my mind. At times when the visual sense is not keenly alive, God means to me a voice, the voices heard in plant life, and then it is still a manifestation of a personal being but I cannot conceive of him further.

"4. The difference in the actual doings of daily life would be immaterial, and the relations between me and human beings would remain the same, because the humanitarian motive seems stronger than the divine. The difference would come in the lack of

final purpose seen in life, an exchange from optimism to pessimism, and more immediately there would be a great difference in my feeling for nature since now my views are touched with Pantheism."

IV. *A woman, junior.*—In nothing do these students differ more than in their opinion of the effect the loss of belief in a personal God would have upon their daily life. Number III thinks that it would not alter her relations with her fellowmen; number I, on the contrary, says she would pursue her own enjoyment and nothing else. She also thinks that the disappearance of God would involve annihilation at death, and that seems to her unbearable. Number IV is of the same mind as I. There would, she thinks, be no use in trying to live without God. Others, however, whom I shall quote, and many others not mentioned here, get along, as they think, very well without God and immortality. That, as we all know, is quite possible. For the rest, number IV is evidently in a great muddle, and in distress because she can no longer follow the "very firmly fixed habit of mind" formed in her childhood. The magnitude and intricacy of the issues on which she feels obliged to take sides, quite overpower her.

"1. My whole idea of God is very indefinite. I think of God as personal.

"2. I think that God is personal in that he stands for a spiritual power that influences man, at least the higher types of men, and influences them individually. I believe that it is this spiritual power in men that makes them human and that makes their higher development possible. . . . But whether this comes from

an outside source such as God or is the natural result of man's evolution I am not sure. I do not believe that God exercises much control over actual events.

"3. God seems to me wholly this spiritual force. I do not believe that he is pleased or displeased with actions, but I believe that the more a person acquires this spirit the more he comes to feel what is called 'in harmony with God.' Hell seems to me the losing of this power and heaven the complete acquiring of it. I don't know whether I believe in the immortality of the soul or not.

"4. I have been brought up in a family and in associations that have made religion a very firmly fixed habit of mind, and I very naturally try to believe in all the orthodox beliefs. And it makes me always very unhappy when I think that there is no God. Of course, there would be no use in living if there were no God and no immortality, and I think it is largely this feeling that makes me try to persuade myself that there is. Certainly there is some spiritual power somewhere and some First Cause for the universe. . . . I do not believe that I shall ever come to definitely and finally believe in anything, for about such things I shall never be able to make up my mind. I have changed some of my ideas even since I wrote this down, and it seems to me impossible that any one should ever say he is sure of anything."

V. *A woman, junior.*—Here is a person who seems to possess settled views. Her description of a God both personal and impersonal is interesting. Very

few of these students give evidence of so much thoughtfulness.

"1. My idea of God is a combination of the personal and impersonal idea. I believe in Him as absolutely perfect, and complete in all conceivable and inconceivable respects; that is, that He is something beyond what the mind of man can grasp. What we know of Him is only a part of His nature. He is therefore impersonal in a general way. But the conception of His completeness demands that He have all characteristics, and therefore He has a personal side.

"2. As personal I consider a Being who has the human attributes, who has emotions, senses, and perhaps human form, resembling man, but not necessarily on the same scale as man's. An impersonal Being would be one who represented the idea of certain qualities, but was not their embodiment, who did not stand for them in material form. The impersonal idea is of a vague formless Being without definiteness, not so much from a deficiency of the personal qualities as from an existence too large for our minds to grasp. It is as though every quality were unlimited and stretched out to the infinite.

"3. I believe that the personal aspect of God is apparent only through the necessity of His communicating with man, that for this one purpose we see this one part of Him, but we are unable to look beyond and see Him in His entire nature. For this reason, in my image of Him only the essential qualities for communication are present. I think of Him as having the sense of hearing, for he listens to my prayers; as having the qualities of mercy and

forgiveness, for I know he displays them toward me; and as having other qualities, such as interest in human affairs, etc. But in order that he may show these same qualities to everyone, he must be perfect and complete, and in my conception of the infinitely complete, the impersonal aspect is also necessary to His nature. . . . This is, therefore, my real idea of Him: certain personal appearances that He should have as personal Being are not present, are merely a form of speech.

"4. I can say sincerely, that, as far as I can see, the non-existence of God would take all the interest out of my daily life. I have a feeling of His power in everything that happens to me, and all my doings are generally with an effort to please Him, but sometimes in rebellion against His power, for the very fact that it is stronger than my own."

VI. *A man, sophomore, aged 20.*—

"1. It is so recently that I have begun to think on the matter of a deity that I have not absolutely decided as yet what God really is. To me, however, in my present state of mind, I think of God rather as an impersonal being.

"2. That is to say, I do not conceive of him as being a certain body or material substance. For this, it appears to me, would have to be limited in proportions, but rather as an all-pervading power, as it were, having all the senses of man and animal, only in a most perfect form. Those powers are not confined to one body, for I seem to believe that God is everywhere and anywhere, and if he were a body, it appears to me there would have been the resistance

offered to his penetration that there is to other material things. Thus, for instance, I believe that God can enter and at times is in my heart and body, and were he a person, he could not well be divided up into bits. Thus to me the difference between a personal being and an impersonal being is that the former seems to confine God into a certain space or body, where there are hands and feet, and a head, etc., while an impersonal being has nothing of the kind, except that it fills the universe and is shapeless.

"3. It may be a remnant of youth, but anyhow, every time I think of God there appears a vague image of a man, with all members of the body, just enormously large. The next instant, however, I correct my image, and instead of that there appears a kind of power (as if it were an expanse of gas) floating in the air and pervading everything. The image thus is only a convenient way in my mind of thinking of God.

"4. The non-existence of a God would make me give up the prayers which I say daily, and further would prevent me from keeping the Sabbath holy. . . . As far as moral principles are concerned, the existence or non-existence is immaterial."

VII. *A woman, age 20.*—Here is a radical nonconformist, with very little respect for clinging parasites seeking shelter and warmth within church doors.

"3. I think of God merely as a term symbolizing our feeling for right and wrong, developed from the savage state when the struggle for existence *alone*,

without regard for any intellectual superiority of man to beast, influenced the human race. I believe that by God is [should be] meant the fine distinction of right and wrong which grows finer and finer as the development of our intellect advances. . . . I believe with Socrates that men would do right if they knew enough and had been properly instructed what a momentous thing is at stake if they choose the wrong. Nobody who knows would choose the wrong.

" I do not think of God under any image but rather as a universal influence. I believe it is within human power to live quite independently of any miraculous help of perhaps a supernatural influence, such as most people conceive God to be. At least my hope urges me thus to believe. It is the underlying cowardice, a remnant of the savage state of the human race, that causes us to lay our troubles at the door of a divine being. As man gradually advances in civilization, he more and more casts off this weakness, I think, and learns to stand on his own feet with this one belief to reassure him — to do right for right's sake and not for any reward in heaven. To me the heavenly reward at the end of life is another sign of cowardice in man, because he does not dare to face the grave and likes to delude himself and not face the actual state of affairs. To this may be added conceit; for why is man so much better than all other existing things that all else should perish but he? "

VIII. *A man, junior, age 21.*—This person thinks of God as " real, actual skin and blood and bones,

something we shall see with our own eyes some day"! Doubts, however, have appeared; he stands watching curiously, and, it seems, peacefully, their advance.

"1. I have been brought up to think of God as a personal being, a very real, actually existing person, who watches over us all, treating us with fortune or misfortune as we merit them. As time goes on I feel myself growing skeptical as to the fact that God sees everything, and has foresight; but as yet the early belief taught me still makes me believe that we are absolutely at his mercy — fixed fate, you may call it.

"3. Here again, due to the fact that I have given so little actual thought, my earlier ideas still hold clear. I think of God as the perfect being living somewhere in the distance surrounded by the company of the blessed. He is all-powerful, but withal magnanimous. I think of him as real, actual skin and blood and bones, something we shall see with our eyes some day, no matter what lives we lead here on earth.

"4. In an uncertain way, I feel that I am watched over and taken care of by the Almighty, and if he should cease to be and I should know of it, I should feel like a ship without a pilot, not daring to do much for fear of hidden reefs, and for fear of suffering harm in meeting the many passing derelicts. I have faith in the belief that he guides our footsteps, and I should falter greatly if the leader should be taken away."

IX. *A woman.*— I quote this pathetic instance because it is typical of a great many young people

who have begun life with a conception of God and religious habits in disagreement with modern knowledge.

"1. I believe in an impersonal God though I should love to believe in a personal one. I believe that there is some great force back of nature, a great Mechanism or Governing Force — the Creator of all things. I believe that after this God has created us, there is no continuation of any personal connection. Therefore, I cannot think of God as a close personal Father, and when I do pray, I always feel that the effort is futile, and consequently when I am in trouble I get no spiritual comfort or uplifting.

"4. I am afraid the non-existence of God would make but little difference in my daily life. I pray to Him every night, but it is always with a sort of superstitious dread,— a fear that neglect of him may provoke anger. Yet my prayer is never helpful to me. Whenever I finish it I am always tormented by the question, After all, *is* there really a God, and does he hear what I am saying? If so, why does he not let me know of his existence as I have so often prayed to him to do. . . . ?"

X. *A man, age 19.*— He represents also, I believe, the condition of a large number of college students.

"1. I have two beliefs in regard to God, which are entirely inconsistent with one another. I see the world about me and realize that a great will, termed God, must have created it. At the time of creation I look upon him as a personal God. Now

it seems to me that God having set the machinery working is letting it run its course and is taking absolutely no part whatsoever in the affairs of man. This being the case, I believe in no God at present but in nature and its works in which God has revealed himself, and therefore I look upon Him now as purely impersonal. Naturally I have never been able to reconcile these beliefs.

"3. God is to me a reverential word-image. It has been dinned into me so much that God is All-merciful, Omnipotent, and Just, that through a kind of superstitious fear I make myself feel respectful at the sight or sound of his name. I have absolutely no visual image of God; if I thought he resembled man I could hardly reverence him as I do at present. I love to think of him as infinity or nature, and quell my doubts by changing the subject.

"4. If the non-existence of God were clearly proved, I think it would make but slight difference, if any, in my daily life. If the spirit of generosity, justice, self-sacrifice, and honesty is inculcated in one, the mere fact that the higher being is found to be a myth could not destroy those characteristics. My character would not undergo any reformation, but I might discontinue the prayers I make to God, which I do in a spirit of cowardice, for I fear to tell myself openly there is no God . . . lest punishment (which I do not believe will come because of any belief of mine) may be visited upon me."

The first of the two final illustrations comes from the only student in my records who gives evidence of having been properly drilled in the official beliefs,

and who has not yet been shaken by the spirit of the age. The second stands squarely upon a non-Christian foundation.

XI. *A woman, age 20.*—

"1. Personal being, because our creed teaches us that God exists in three persons.

"3. I think of God as merciful, loving, just, all-powerful Father, existing in three distinct persons — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — known as the Trinity. The Trinity is a mystery, accepted as an article of faith by some religions and not accepted by others. I believe that the Father created us, that the Son redeemed us, and that the Holy Ghost sanctified us. I never think of God as one distinct person; at the mention of the name, the idea of God in three persons comes into my mind.

"4. The non-existence of God would make a decided difference in my daily life. First of all, in the morning I should never thank Him who has guarded us safely during the night and I should not ask His protection during the day. In a very short time, I should be selfish, doing all I could for myself, forgetting that I should give assistance to the needy and overladen. All my work would be done for the glory of man and not for the glory of the One who has made us. At the close of the day, I should not thank God for the many blessings bestowed on me which enabled me to do my work in such a way that it would be pleasing in the sight of God."

XII. *A woman, age 18.*—

"1. As an impersonal being.

"2. I have never tried to formulate my somewhat vague beliefs, but I mean that I do not believe in a Supreme Being who enters into and regulates the course of our daily existence. There must be some supreme force which regulates the universe as a whole, but I cannot conceive of it as anything near or in any way tangible.

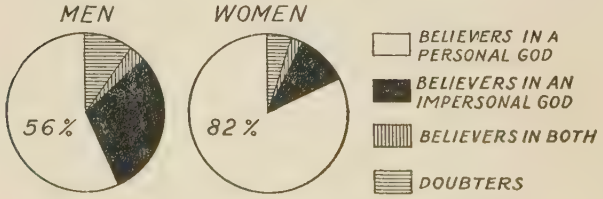
"4. As far as I can see, it does not in any way determine my daily life."

We may now pass to the statistical results of the investigation.

II. THE PERSONAL OR IMPERSONAL NATURE OF GOD

The answers to the first question required careful interpretation, for the words "personal" and "impersonal" did not convey the same meaning to every student. But, as the second question usually brought out the significance ascribed to these terms, their interpretation rarely presented any difficulty. In chart I, "personal God" has the meaning defined on pages 173 and 174.

CHART I



As many as 31 per cent. of the men, and only 11 per cent. of the women, conceive God as impersonal. If the "doubtful" cases are added, the percentages

rise to 40.5 per cent. for the men, and to 15.7 per cent. for the women. This greater variation from tradition on the part of the men is one of the striking features of these records. It must be referred on the whole, I think, to a stronger impulse to self-affirmation and freedom, and to a correlated lesser need of affection and of moral support felt by the men.[3]

Investigation B (see the following section) indicates that the proportion of disbelievers in immortality increases considerably from the freshman to the senior year in college. Considered all together, my data would indicate that from 40 to 50 per cent. of the young men leaving college entertain an idea of God incompatible with the acceptance of the Christian religion, even as interpreted by the liberal clergy.

The conception of God varies frequently in the same person as he passes from one mood to another. These cases have been counted under "Both Personal and Impersonal." Here are a few instances of this henotheism: —

A woman, age 22.—"In an agitated frame of mind I think of God as a personal father who is ready to reward or punish, but generally I think of God as a mass of forces, having certain effects following from certain causes, the force that causes us to do good brings with it its own reward, and *vice versa.*"

A man, age 21.—"God to my mind is an impersonal being, but whether for convenience or through

[3] See chapter X, *Individualism as a Cause of the Rejection of Traditional Belief.*

sheer impotence I pray to him as a personal being. I probably think of Christ when I pray. . . . I know I talk on both sides of the fence, but that is just where I am, and until I get personality into the being which I realize is impersonal, I must try to find it. Experience teaches me it is the 'juste milieu' that is worth most."

A man, age 20.—"I have never given this matter serious attention. . . . My two views of God involve contradictions. . . . When I regard God as a creator and ruler He is distinctly personal. But when I believe that man works out his own salvation, and that things need no superior mind to direct them, then God seems to me impersonal. . . . An impersonal being may be compared to an automaton."

But whether the contradiction is realized or not by the student, it never seems particularly to disturb him. He thinks of God according to his practical needs, and if logic is considered at all, it is in second place: —

A woman, age 23.—"I think of God as both a personal and impersonal being. I think of him as personal when I feel the need of some support outside myself; a sympathy and understanding which no one else can give. I like to think of him as impersonal at other times; as a power like ether, which is infused through everything."

A woman, senior.—"When I am just thinking about him in a speculative or philosophical way, I generally think of him as impersonal, but for practical purposes I think of him as personal.

"By a personal God I mean the God I naturally

turn towards when I feel as if things were getting too hard for me."

A man, age 20.—"Knowing as little as I do of the two sides, the personal and the impersonal, I should always rely upon the personal nature of God to bring me through."

The difference between these young people — the flower of the land — who turn to God when they need him, and the Zulus, who think of the spirits of their forefathers only when they go to war,[4] is that the savages never disbelieve in the existence of these forefathers, whereas in their calm moments college men and women do deny the God on whom they call in the time of their need.

III. THE FORM, OR IMAGE, OR SYMBOL UNDER WHICH GOD IS CONCEIVED

Two thirds of the men, and nearly half the women disclaim any mental picture of God.[5] The larger number of the remainder distinguish between image or symbol, and reality. In a remarkably large number of cases, however, a description in sensory terms is held to represent God adequately. That young people having reached the mental development of college students should think of God as "actual skin and blood and bones, something we shall see with

[4] Max Muller: *The Science of Religion;* page 43.

[5] Of 290 men, 39 per cent. imagine God in human form. To 80 of these the form is a mere symbol; to 20, it is a reality; while 7 find it impossible to decide whether the image represents the reality or is a symbol. Of 640 women, 34.5 per cent. picture God in human shape. Of these, 166 state definitely that the image is a mere symbol, 42 think it actually represents the reality, while 13 cannot decide.

our eyes some day," is almost incredible; but the evidence is compelling. Seven per cent. hold apparently to a thoroughly anthropomorphic conception of God: —

A man, age 21.—"I imagine God in the same form as any human being; the same as man. I think God and man are equal physically, or were equal physically at one time but man has deteriorated. God has all the feelings and passions of mankind. He can love and hate, reward and punish, as a man does."

A woman, senior.—"God has always been and still is a personal Being for me. . . . By personal I think I mean a being which has individuality, one that has a definite shape, in the sense that it is distinguishable from empty space."

A woman, age 19.—"I have always pictured him according to a description in *Paradise Lost* as seated upon a throne, while around him are angels playing on harps and singing hymns. The angels are merely images which are not realities, while the figure of God stands for the reality."

A man, age 20.—"I think of God as a personal being. A personal being would have a form that you could see or touch, while an impersonal being would have nothing in common with human beings."

The character of the imagery is frequently traced to Sunday-school pictures, church windows, statuary, and the like. The human shape is naturally the most frequent form assumed by the representations; occasionally, a flame, a sphere, a cloud, an all-seeing eye, an immense voice, a soft wind, stand as symbol. The following illustrations give only a very

inadequate idea of the variety and frequent oddity of these images: —

A woman, freshman.—"I think of God as having bodily form and being much larger than the average man. He has a radiant countenance beaming with love and compassion. He is erect and upright, fearless and brave."

A woman, sophomore.—"When I think of God at all definitely I have in mind the image of a head, with dark brown flowing hair and dark eyes; below the head the arms of the image are extended. They seem wrapped in soft gray folds rather like clouds; the whole figure — which has no definite shape — is draped in the same stuff which extends far down around the earth."

A woman, sophomore, age 20.—"The image under which I think of God is always confused in my mind with the image which I have of the Saviour . . . but the image of God is always a little the less distinct of the two. I think that my image must be very much like the reality."

A woman, sophomore, 19.—"When God is mentioned, I always think of the picture of a man . . . as king with all the insignia of royalty. I am not sure as to what is the image and what the reality in this image."

A woman, senior.—"God is like flame . . . I do not think that God is flame, . . . but flame is the thing in human experience that comes nearest to my conception of what God is."

A woman, sophomore.—"The image in which I see God most often is a sphere. Of course this is quite distinct from my opinion as to the real image

in which God might appear, but the phrase, 'God is all in all,' makes me always feel that a sphere is the only image in which God can appear in which he would fit this."

To ascribe to God the female sex seems almost impossible to one nurtured in a Christian country, yet even that idea is present in these records: —

A man.—"Sometimes I have pictured to myself a sort of beautiful woman . . . but the majority of the time I do not think of God under any image whatever."

A woman.—"I think of God almost as if he were a second greater mother, to whom I can tell my troubles. . . . He has a certain vivid, mother-like personality, yet I never see him under any definite image. I feel him rather than see him."

The majority think images serviceable to them and wish to preserve them. A few, however, consider images debasing and would like to get rid of them. Here are instances of each: —

A man, aged 18.—"Although I do not think of God as a person, I find satisfaction and a sense of reality in endowing him with certain fine human qualities. . . . I generally think of God as a great, benign, bright, splendid man."

A woman, age 18.—"It makes God seem more real and present to think of him as possessing human form."

A woman.—"My first image of God is seen against my will and quite instinctively; invariably the figure of a white-robed figure. I think it is a woman,— the expression of the face is feminine,— with lacerated brow and hands and feet. I know

that this image is due to the wickedly distorted imagination of my childish training in religion. It is wrong, untrue, degrading. The image which in my better moments I can successfully form of God is a different thing, but so indefinite I can hardly describe it."

A man, age 20.—"I think of God somewhat as a superhuman being — an enormous, majestic figure. His face resembles Michael Angelo's *Moses*, but his extremities don't seem to have any definite ending like our hands and feet, but seem just to float off into space and as it were to cover and protect the whole world. It really seems to me to be a barbarian and somewhat heathenish way of imagining anything so great and wonderful as God."

One might see in these quotations an argument in support of Rousseau's contention that not until the "age of reason" should God be so much as mentioned to children.

IV. GOD'S RELATION TO MAN

Believing in a personal God does not necessarily mean holding those relations with him that constitute religious life. The belief may be a mere echo of tradition or a philosophical notion. In order to find information on the importance to these students of their religious ideas, one must turn to their answers to the last question, "What difference would the non-existence of God make in your life?" The needs gratified by the belief in God may be classified under three heads; need for explanation, for righteousness, and for affective support.

A philosophical conviction of the existence of God, i. e., a belief that gratifies intellectual curiosity, is rare among these students. But God is very often spoken of as the principle of righteousness, manifesting itself in us, or as the Being whose approval or love makes it possible for us to triumph over temptation and gives us hope of realizing our ideals. Expressions like these are common: —

"God means everything to me in moral struggles"; "Morality alone would not be sufficient for inspiration and guidance in daily life"; "Trust in God keeps me from worrying and makes me happy and better"; "God is a constant support for the immediate task — without him I could not live"; "God is the highest perfection, all-knowing, all-wise. . . . His non-existence would mean the non-existence of hope, of any reason for preferring good to evil." "If God had not existed for me, I should have been a law-breaker and a criminal. Now if my belief should change, I might pass beyond control."

The need for the love of an always adequate friend plays a very great part in establishing belief in God. The conviction that "God is love" may make unnecessary any further knowledge of him. In that case he is described as "directly interested in me," "friend," "comforter," "sympathetic father," and every other attribute seems forgotten: —

A woman.— If God did not exist, "there would be no one . . . to whom we could go at all times for sympathy in joys and sorrows."

A woman.— "If there were no God I should seek more sympathy from my friends."

A man.—"Some people apparently go through life without bothering about God. Some one says: 'Is he necessary after all?' The answer is that such happy-go-lucky people know not the needs of human nature; their wills are out of conformity with the Logos. Every one who is ever brought face to face with trouble realizes man's need and striving after God, and almost to a man these people in misfortune, I think, turn to a personal God."

Many admit that the universe is to them most of the time godless; now and then, however, particularly in the hour of need, a sudden kaleidoscopic change takes place, and God is felt hovering about and filling the air with his protecting and loving presence.

The greater self-reliance of the men and their greater independence from tradition is again in evidence in the answers to question four. Thirty-two per cent. of the men and only seventeen per cent. of the women declare that the non-existence of God would make no difference at all in their lives. If the "doubtful" cases are added the proportions become 43 per cent. for the men and 22 per cent. for the women.

In estimating the significance of these figures we should remember that when one is brought face to face suddenly with a question never before considered, the natural tendency is to state the traditional opinion. Now, the probable effect of the non-existence of God had perhaps never before been considered by these students. One may, therefore, take

it that the number of those who ascribe to God a great influence upon them is larger than would truly represent the facts. It should also be observed that in several instances the affirmation of the great importance of the existence of God is nothing more than a logical deduction from the theoretical belief that God is the creator and the upholder of the universe, and does not involve necessarily the existence of warm personal relations with him.

Putting together those who think God's existence of great importance to them, and those who ascribe to it a small, or a merely occasional value, we get, for the men, 57 per cent. The others (43 per cent.) apparently think themselves morally independent of the existence of God.

Are we to accept the opinion stated by these persons as expressing correctly the value to them of the belief in the existence of God? Obviously not. The conviction that one could not get along in the absence of certain material or spiritual possessions, is very frequently proved false by later events. As this is not the place to consider the value to humanity, and in particular to these students, of the belief in God, I shall remark merely that those who think their belief in God essential have not had occasion to test their conviction; whereas those who think themselves morally independent of the belief and who also disclaim the belief, i. e., nearly the whole of the 43 per cent. may be said to have demonstrated their moral independence of the belief in God. In the absence of satisfactory proof, one need not consider as valid the opinion that the morality

of the unbelievers is derived from that of the believers.

The deepest impression left by these records is that, so far as religion is concerned, our students are groveling in darkness. Christianity, as a system of belief, has utterly broken down, and nothing definite, adequate, and convincing has taken its place. Their beliefs, when they have any, are superficial and amateurish in the extreme. There is no generally acknowledged authority; each one believes as he can, and few seem disturbed at being unable to hold the tenets of the churches. This sense of freedom is the glorious side of an otherwise dangerous situation.

CHAPTER VIII

INVESTIGATION B: THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY IN AN AMERICAN COLLEGE

Investigation A was concerned with the belief in a personal God in nine American colleges and one Normal School; investigation B deals exclusively with the belief in immortality in one college of high rank and of moderate size, whose students are divided in their affiliation among all the important Protestant denominations. It includes, in addition, a few Roman Catholics. The spirit of this institution is assuredly as religious as that of the average American college.

Ninety per cent. (seniors, 95.8 per cent.; juniors, 97.7 per cent.) of all the students answered a set of questions divided into three parts: the existence of the belief, its influence upon the individual life, and the grounds upon which the belief is held.[6] How this somewhat difficult performance was accomplished and what care was taken in order not to prejudice the students, is explained in a foot-note.[7]

[6] The Questionnaire will be found in an Appendix to this book.

[7] The word *questionnaire* recurs so frequently in these pages that I shall take the liberty of replacing it by its first letter, capitalized.

If I give only percentages and no absolute figure, it is merely in order to prevent the identification of the college.

The Q. were distributed by students to the rooms of all the

The most striking result of this inquiry is the high percentage of believers in the lower classes and the relatively high percentage of disbelievers in the higher classes (see chart II). Only 15 per cent. of

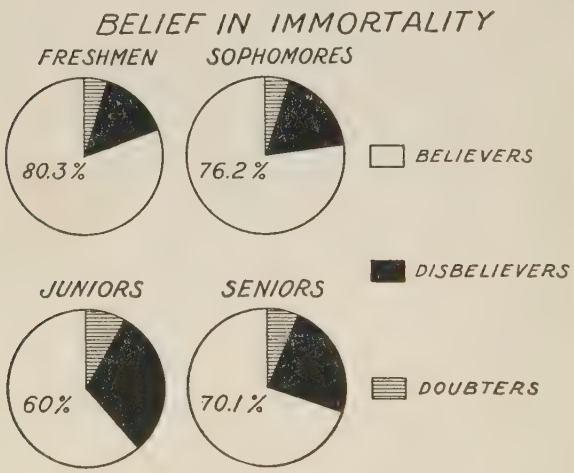
students in residence, on a Sunday morning, between nine and ten o'clock, and were collected just before lunch on the same day. A few were handed in later in the day, and a few others on the next day. The non-residents received the Q. on the following day, i. e., on Monday morning, on their arrival at the college. They were requested to place their answers during the day in a box provided for the purpose.

The professor who conducted the investigation had announced in several of the largest classes that all the students of the college would be asked on Sunday morning to answer a set of questions, but the subject of the investigation was not disclosed. It was explained that they were held in ignorance in order to prevent discussion in advance. The great desirability of having every one answer in order to make the information gathered valuable for statistical purposes was emphasized, and the directions printed at the head of the Q. were read to them without comment. The students present in each class visited were requested to pass on to the others the information they had just received.

When it was found that a considerable number of freshmen and sophomores had failed to answer, an effort was made to complete the statistics from these two classes. Students of the upper classes interviewed the freshmen and the sophomores and placed the Q. directly or indirectly, in the hands of those who had not answered. It was ascertained that most of these were absent from college when the questions were first circulated. A few explained that they had not answered because they were too uncertain of their beliefs. One said, "I know nothing at all about it," and another, "I did not want to be bothered with these questions." No evidence could be obtained tending to show that students who entertained definite opinions had refused to answer. Arrangements were made for the collection of the tardy answers in a manner to preserve the students' *incognito*. Among the students of the two lower classes who responded to the second call, the proportion of disbelievers is slightly larger than in the others. In table III all the answers are included.

the freshmen reject immortality, and 4 per cent. are uncertain; while nearly 32 per cent. of the juniors have given it up, and 8 per cent. more are uncertain.

CHART II



The seniors (24 per cent. of disbelievers and 6 per cent. of uncertain) stand nearer the lower classes than the juniors. It will probably be supposed that this fact indicates a return to a "saner" view after a brief iconoclastic period; i. e., the greater unbelief of the juniors will be taken to mark the effect of a little knowledge, and the greater belief of the seniors, the reaction that has set in with increased maturity. I can not accept that interpretation. When the results were announced several students, including both seniors and juniors, offered in explanation of the fact mentioned the acknowledged, exceptional independence and "intellectual

superiority of the junior class." The professors I interviewed concurred in this judgment. Furthermore, Investigation C provides incontrovertible evidence of a decrease of belief corresponding with an increase of knowledge and of general mental ability.

Not only do the younger students believe more generally, but nearly all the believers accept the doctrine of unconditional immortality. In so far as that is the traditional Christian belief, this result should have been expected of persons who unthinkingly reflect prevalent opinions. We may note that the junior class again distinguishes itself by a relatively high proportion of believers in conditional immortality (13 per cent. as against 4 per cent. for the freshmen). The seniors are also in this respect nearer the lower classes than the juniors.

The effect of the loss of belief, as estimated by these students, changes little as one passes from Freshman to Senior. The great majority think it would be considerable. Whatever change there is, is in the direction of a decrease in the estimated effect. If there is anything clearly disclosed by the study of the origin and of the grounds for the modern belief in immortality, it is that the strongest factor of belief is the conviction that without continuation after death, this life would be morally inacceptable. Now, the statistics reveal the interesting fact that a considerable number of believers do not think the loss would have any influence upon their lives; immortality is for them a fact without vital significance. May we not then conclude that those who believe either in conditional or in uncon-

ditional immortality and who, at the same time, declare that the loss of the belief would leave them unconcerned, are on the point of discarding that belief?

It is noteworthy that almost 25 per cent. of those who can not declare a belief in immortality, nevertheless desire it; and that of these, four fifths belong to the two upper classes of the college. Since a considerable number desire immortality, though they do not believe, a decrease or a loss of desire may not be made responsible for the decrease in the number of believers. The increase in unbelief observed as one passes from the younger to the older classes, indicates rather the growing recognition of the insufficiency of the foundation upon which the belief stands.

Fifty-one per cent. of the freshmen, and forty-nine per cent. of the sophomores, declare that they have never assigned any reason for their belief in immortality. That the younger students should have failed more frequently than the older ones to concern themselves with the reasons for their belief, is not surprising; but that as many as 45 per cent. of the believing juniors and 40 per cent. of the believing seniors should be in that naïve situation, may well cause some astonishment. These figures would refute the accusation that some might be inclined to direct against colleges for indoctrinating their students. They indicate rather how distressingly uninterested and ignorant these "cultivated" young people are regarding what is commonly considered a great religious issue. The preceding section has shown that they are equally naïve with regard to the conception of God.

Very little significance may be attached to the figures referring to the arguments "supporting" or "establishing" the belief. I shall merely note that four times out of five, they are said to "support," not to "establish," the belief, and that they are in general agreement with the statement made in the first part of this book: the belief of these students — when it has any conscious basis — rests preponderantly upon moral arguments and upon faith in a personal God.[8]

We should hardly have expected to find 35 per cent. of the juniors and seniors in a Christian college unable to profess belief in immortality, and a considerable additional number evidently indifferent to it. This situation points to a very profound change now taking place in the convictions of our educated young people regarding a belief usually considered vital to Christianity.

The knowledge we have gained as to the loss of belief suffered by students leaves unanswered the momentous question of the later development of their religious convictions. If we cannot now discover the beliefs these young people will entertain twenty

[8] The first argument was named 71 times; the second, 43 times; the third, 168 times; the fourth, 112 times; the fifth, 180 times; the sixth, 170 times; the seventh, 70 times; the eighth, 88 times.

Several students completed the list of arguments they found in the Q. by adding the resurrection of Christ. My intention was not to include every possible ground of belief, but to seek information upon the influence of certain of them. Had the resurrection of Christ been on the list, a large proportion of the students would have doubtless marked it.

years hence, we can at least find out those of the men and women who preceded them in college and are now pursuing professional careers. This we shall do in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX

INVESTIGATION C: THE BELIEF IN GOD AND IN IMMORTALITY AMONG AMERICAN SCIENTISTS, SOCIOLOGISTS, HISTORIANS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS

In this investigation, I was able to make use of *American Men of Science*, a volume containing about fifty-five hundred names, and of the membership lists of the American Historical Association, the American Sociological Society, and the American Psychological Association. Any one familiar with these lists will know that their standard of inclusion is rather too low than too high; it would be easy to single out from the membership of the American Psychological Association many persons who could hardly be offended if denied the right to be called psychologists. I say this in order that it may not be imagined that this inquiry deals only with men of very high achievements.

A study of statistics shows that a relatively small number of the members of a group suffice to represent with a high degree of exactness the whole group, provided the selection made be a chance selection. The probable error resulting from such limitation is, moreover, mathematically ascertainable. I have been assured by statisticians that results based on the whole list of fifty-five hundred men of science

and results based on five hundred, would be to all intents and purposes the same. I shall not weary the reader with a mathematical demonstration of the truth of this statement. A practical demonstration will, I am sure, advantageously replace it. Such a proof might be attempted by carrying out two separate, but otherwise identical investigations, each involving five hundred persons taken by a rule of chance from the volume named. Should their conclusions coincide, they could be held to be valid also for the entire fifty-five hundred men listed in *American Men of Science.* This is precisely the procedure I followed, i.e., I carried out separately two identical investigations, each including 500 scientists. In every one of the other groups my investigation included a larger proportion of the whole than in the case of the scientists.

The chief difficulty in the way of statistical investigations such as the present one, is that not all those addressed answer. This may introduce a type of selection that vitiates results. In order to minimize as much as possible this cause of error, I formulated possible beliefs, and requested the recipients of the Q. to mark with a cross all those that were true for them, and I inclosed addressed and stamped envelopes. A minimum of time and thought for answering was thus required. This procedure had the additional advantage of getting all answers in the same forms.

It was not an easy task to formulate satisfactorily for all those to whom the Q. was to be sent, the particular beliefs on which I wished the investigation to bear. Expressions in common use were to be preferred to philosophical and theological terms, for these would not al-

ways have been understood or construed in a uniform sense. As I was not concerned with fine points in the conception of God, it was not necessary to frame the statements so as to satisfy the technical philosopher accustomed to consider a tangle of problems where the ordinary man — and in this respect, our scientists are ordinary men — sees but a relatively simple question. The adequacy of the Q. for men of science, if not for philosophers, will, I think, be admitted when the use I intended to make of the answers is fully known.

Despite the measures taken to facilitate the task of those addressed, it proved necessary to send out a second pressing request, again with addressed and stamped envelope. This was done not only for the 1000 men of science, but also for every other group. The time that elapsed between sending out the first and second requests was not the same for each group. When answers had practically ceased to come in, the second request was dispatched. All answers received later than one day after mailing the second request, were counted as answers to it, although a few of these were no doubt belated responses to the first request. As I had not requested signatures, I had to address again every person included in the investigation, except those who had chosen to give their names.

Friends told me that I should not succeed, and they advanced various reasons. Most of their predictions remained unrealized. A number of those addressed did indeed refuse to answer, and a few made derogatory comments; but on the whole, the members of every group found it possible to answer to their own satisfaction — the philosophers excepted. I shall mention later the special difficulties encountered in the attempt to extend the investigation to philosophers.

The many remarks written in the margin of the re-

turned Q. and the letters of those who would not, could not, or thought they could not answer, have frequently a real psychological interest. I shall take occasion when discussing the causes of failure to answer, to quote some of these utterances. They will throw much light on the reception accorded to the Q.

The *Questionnaires* sent to the two groups of five hundred scientists follow. A slightly different set of questions was sent to the second five hundred and to the other groups. These changes are commented upon below.

A STATISTICAL INQUIRY

(*First Form*)

Conflicting statements are confidently made regarding the prevalence among civilized Christian nations of the belief in God and in Personal Immortality. Nevertheless sufficient data are not extant to support any opinion.

The accompanying questions are sent to 500 persons taken by chance from those listed in *American Men of Science,* in the hope of securing statistics valid for this whole group. The condition of success is that all those addressed respond. No satisfactorily definite conclusions could be drawn if many of those addressed refused or neglected to answer.

It will take you only a few seconds to make a mark to the right of every statement true for you. Please do it, if at all possible, on receipt of this paper and return it in the inclosed stamped envelope. Your answer may be anonymous.

A. CONCERNING THE BELIEF IN GOD.

1. I believe in a God in intellectual and affective com-

munication with man, I mean a God to whom one may pray in the expectation of receiving an answer. By "answer," I do not mean the subjective, psychological effect of prayer.

2. I do not believe in a God as defined above.....
3. I am an agnostic.....

B. CONCERNING THE BELIEF IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY.

1. I believe in { personal I for all men..... / conditional I, i. e., for those who have reached a certain state of development.
2. I believe neither in conditional nor in unconditional I of the person.....
3. I am an agnostic.....
4. Although I cannot believe in P. I., I desire it ..... { intensely..... / moderately.....
5. I do not desire P. I. .....

(*Second Form*)

A. CONCERNING THE BELIEF IN GOD.

1. I believe in a God to whom one may pray in the expectation of receiving an answer. *By "answer," I mean more than the subjective, psychological effect of prayer*.....
2. I do not believe in a God *as defined above*.....
3. I have no definite belief regarding this question.....

B. CONCERNING THE BELIEF IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY, I. E., THE BELIEF IN CONTINUATION OF THE PERSON AFTER DEATH IN ANOTHER WORLD.

1. I believe in { personal Immortality for all men..... / conditional Immortality, i. e., Immortality for those who have reached a certain state of development.

2. I believe neither in conditional nor in unconditional Immortality of the person in another world.....
3. I have no definite belief regarding this question.....
4. I desire personal immortality { intensely..... / moderately..... / not at all.....

Remarks upon the changes made in the second form of the Q.: —

1. I thought it advisable to leave out the words " in intellectual and affective communication with man " which appear in A 1 of the Q. sent to the first division of 500 scientists. The meaning is sufficiently indicated in the rest of the sentence. By substituting in the same statement " I mean more than," for " I do not mean," the intended meaning becomes clearer and the sense is not changed.

2. Instead of " I am an agnostic," I wrote in the revised Q., both in sections A and B, " I have no definite belief regarding this question." The meaning ascribed by my correspondents to these two formulations will be discussed later.

3. The heading of section B was extended in the second form by the addition of " i. e., the belief in continuation of the person after death in another world." This addition excludes cases of belief in transmigration at death in animal or human forms living on the earth. Few answers if any could have been affected by the change. A similar addition was made to statement B 2.

4. In the first Q., the questions regarding desire for immortality are addressed only to those who do not believe; in the second Q., they are addressed to all alike: believers, disbelievers, and doubters. The answers made to B 4 by the first division are therefore not comparable with those made to B 4 by the second division.

I. THE CAUSES OF THE FAILURE TO ANSWER AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

As the attitude assumed towards the Q., and the reasons for abstaining to answer were on the whole the same in every group, I shall discuss these matters now, once for all, and with especial reference to the men of science. In the few instances in which the figures and the extracts from letters belong to other groups, I shall indicate their origin.

The reader will find it necessary to remember that in the *Questionnaire* all the statements under A refer to God, and those under B to immortality. A 1 is a statement of belief in a personal God; A 2, one of disbelief in that God; A 3, one of agnosticism or doubtfulness. Similarly, B 1, is a statement of belief in personal immortality, either unconditional or conditional; B 2 one of disbelief; B 3, one of agnosticism or doubtfulness.

A. THE FAILURE TO RETURN OR TO MARK THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Almost one quarter of those addressed either returned a blank Q. or did not return it at all. This is a considerable percentage, and were we altogether in the dark as to their cause, these failures would lower considerably the value of the statistics. But, thanks to the remarks of many who refused to answer, and also to certain other data, we are able to disregard some of these blanks or failures to answer as not affecting the investigation, and to classify at least approximately a considerable number of the remainder.

Those who did not return the Q. amount to not quite 10 per cent.; of these, an indeterminable number may be put down as dead, or critically ill, or absent. The failure of these to answer may be considered as not affecting the statistics, since there is no reason to think that the dead, the critically ill, and the absent belong entirely or predominantly to a particular class of believers.

Turning to the 14.7 per cent. whose Q. were returned blank, we observe first that these are not all to be regarded as expressions of unwillingness to answer. Altogether 22 of these were reported as dead, and 26 as not found, away, or ill. The failure of these to answer leaves the investigation unaffected. There remain 99 of the blank Q., that is about 10 per cent. of the total number sent out. A large number of these fall into more or less exactly defined categories, which I shall now characterize and illustrate.

There are many people who do not know what you mean unless you speak in terms of weight and measure. How must the devout believer who "lives with God" be startled when he encounters fellowmen like some of my correspondents. Two greater scientists wrote, for instance: —

"I cannot answer these questions. I do not know what they mean. I have no interest in them, and can hardly conceive of any one wishing to know."

"I have not the slightest desire to answer those questions, either to myself or to any other person."

One person jeered at me for expecting "scientific men" to answer questions "not accessible to proof," questions that are "not matters of knowledge." I

gaped in amazement on reading the two following stout pronouncements: —

"As a scientist my entire attention is directed to matters accessible to proof. Neither of your questions belongs to this category."

"How is it possible for a sane student to answer these questions? They do not deal with phenomena or material which we can investigate. I believe in everything that is."

Well, after all, beliefs, disbeliefs, and doubts exist, they are *real;* and they come into existence without cause no more than physical phenomena. Therefore, seeing that religious beliefs move men to actions of vast consequence, let the psychologist continue to busy himself with them. I have fair hopes that some of these narrow minded scientists may be brought to see, perhaps by means of this investigation, that there is another real world open to scientific study beside the one they acknowledge; and that in fact they themselves, as well as everybody else, live in that world.

A certain number did not answer because they were too completely "at sea." "My views are too vague to be of any value," says one of these. Another excuses himself on the ground that he "has not investigated the subject." Another who has given long hours to considering these problems, states that his opinions "are too indefinite to justify their presentation in the categorical form inquired after." It would seem that the person who "neither believes nor disbelieves," but rejoices "in a suspended judgment," would be in a position to mark A 3 and B 3. He did not do so, however. "I have my doubts,"

writes one who also prefers not to mark A 3 and B 3, "about many of these things, and believe that hypnotism and superstition are the basis of much we believe."

Why did not the person who declares himself a member of the Christian church and answers that he "tries to live up to its teachings," mark the Q.? Are we to infer that he does not accept the dogma of his church, and merely endeavors to live up to its practical teaching?

What a sorry figure this man cuts: —

"I am a Presbyterian by heredity and by profession. I have no wish to be considered ambiguous or a hypocrite; neither have I any wish to leave the beliefs of my fathers. I wish my faith could be as simple as that of some of my relatives who are now dead. If I had children I would have a responsibility that fortunately I do not now carry. I must admit there are many things that I cannot accept as proven."

The opposition between feeling or belief and knowledge appears frequently as a source of difficulty in marking the Q. An historian writes: —

"I have found it impossible to decide how far the beliefs as stated were the result of my own definite, intellectual conclusions based on a fair amount of investigation, and how far they were affected by a very conscious aversion to breaking with my ancestral past. We are doubtless all conscious of wide divergence in belief from the beliefs held by our parents. Yet I personally hesitate to commit myself irrevocably on paper to a statement to this effect."

This person is certainly right in conjecturing that her hesitancy to break with the past is somewhat widely shared. The result is, of course, to swell the number of believers by the addition of many who are not really convinced.

An unusually subtle and complex attitude, involving more than the opposition of belief and knowledge, is revealed in this very interesting letter of a psychologist. I do not know what part in it should be ascribed to downright aboulia, and what to a legitimate unwillingness to forego the least particle of freedom by pinning oneself down to a formulated belief.

"I owe you an apology for not answering your questions before this. . . . I seem to find no question to which I should care to give a categorical answer. Will you let me say, however, that the questions seem to me to trench upon an area which I find in a state of flux a considerable part of the time? They refer to what in my own case I seem to regard as a protean element of consciousness, which like water is now fluid, now a crystallized solid, and now an imperceptible vapor. This element of consciousness, I somehow feel it is important not to reduce to categories, not even to that of indefiniteness or to that of mysticism. . . .

"In these days of the new ecclesiasticism, the ecclesiasticism of science, when the so called applications of science are actively engaged in formulating, fixing, mechanizing, institutionalizing, and standardizing, I feel, though perhaps at the risk, in this instance, of totally misunderstanding the purpose of a serious piece of scientific research, that one may

silently persist in trying to live, part of the time at least, in or with the fluid medium of shifting belief — now melting and evanishing quite, now precipitating afresh, now firm as a rock on which to stand — of the unsettled and problematic character of which belief science has made us all the more certain, while helping to free us from bondage to externals."

I sent the writer questions in another form, hoping that now at least he would be able to answer. I got in reply this letter:

"I find it quite disconcerting to seem to be so disobliging as still not to answer your Statistical Inquiry. I have tried to give what I could of my reasons for my reluctance in my previous letter. I am not sure that I can completely or accurately account for this reluctance. Very likely I cannot account for it. I regret it none the less, for I would gladly coöperate with you in your investigation; but I seem to be profoundly inhibited for some reason, or lack of reason."

I should have been surprised and sorry to find among scientists many instances of refusal to answer because of the "privacy" (signatures were not asked for) or the "sacredness" of religious beliefs. Only six, perhaps, belong to the suspicious class of those who try to persuade themselves and others that matters of faith are too sacred to be recorded for a scientific purpose: —

"I feel that these matters are of a personal and private nature, and . . . I do not care to express myself."

"Those are matters of individual concern only and

a statistical study of them is unnecessary and useless."

I shall venture to think that the weightier reason for the dislike displayed by most of these "scientists" for research in religious life, is that given in the second clause of the following sentence which I italicize: "Those questions are of too personal a nature to permit of public expression — *even were it possible for me to express or formulate my belief.*"

Several are convinced that the beliefs in question are not matters of knowledge, but of faith, or of "spirit," and therefore they prefer not to answer: —

"Ideas of a God are to me not matters of scientific knowledge but of faith; and a scientific examination of faiths does no especial good, I therefore prefer not to answer."

Again, in cases of this last sort, one cannot escape the suspicion that the excuse given covers some other, more real impediment. Why should faith in a personal God and in personal immortality prevent one from stating that faith? Have these believers forgotten the noble and brave example of prophets and apostles who proclaimed their faith even in the face of an angry world? I suspect that had these persons possessed a real and lucid belief, they would have responded to my provocative questions with the quickness of powder to the match. They would have burst out in exclamatory sentences as others of my correspondents did: —

"Of course, every Christian does."

"I have positive knowledge of God by actual experience."

"I not only believe firmly in a personal God, but feel certain of his existence."

Closely related to those who will not debase "faith" and "things of the spirit" by utterance, is the position of one who informs me briefly that she will not analyze her religious feelings. Why not? Probably because of a fear that clear-eyed contemplation might entail an irreparable loss. A sociologist confesses that he "almost fears to reason" about these topics. When he attempts it, he "cannot reach the conclusion that a personal God watching over us all and ready to listen to and grant our petitions exists"; but "in moments of exaltation or of sorrow one does not reason about God, but instinctively gives thanks or prays for help and comfort." If this shifting attitude is rare among men of trained minds, it is not infrequent in others. I have had occasion elsewhere to comment upon the effect of feeling and emotion in bringing to the fore old attitudes and beliefs. When thinking is inhibited, the habitual, the traditional gets the upper hand.

Pragmatic principles, in absolute contempt of objective truth, are expressed in several communications. I suppose that perfect worldly wisdom consists in believing in God when advantageous, and in disbelieving in him when belief is disadvantageous. Some of my correspondents have attained to this perfection. Here are the more striking instances of this attitude; they refer to the belief in God: —

"Sometimes, yes; sometimes, no, according to my temporary needs."

"Philosophical discussion of religious matters often afford opportunities for intellectual athletics and mental relaxation, but there is comfort in the belief of the existence of an Almighty without any consideration as to the details of such a belief. . . . Such beliefs do not and should not interfere with the efficiency of a man, or prevent his working out his own salvation in worldly matters."

"Strong belief, and absolutely no knowledge," is admitted by a good many, particularly with reference to immortality. A sociologist, for instance, who unlike the preceding marked both A 1 and B 1, writes, "I have no scientific reasons to back my belief. I believe in immortality because I like it."

But those who, despite absence of all knowledge, behave as if they believed, are not all so outspoken. Sometimes a tone of helplessness and even of shame creeps into the confession: —

"I certainly do not believe in a God defined as above, and yet I use him sometimes as though I did — as though it were a useful custom left over from childhood." (The writer marked A 2 and B 2.)

"Do I believe in a personal God and immortality? If you mean completely and always, certainly not. Practically, I sometimes act as if I believed. There is often definite prayer but no sense of warmth or close contact." (From a psychologist.)

A sociologist who answers A 2, "Intellectually, no," makes the following marginal note: "In crises

a traditional belief recently appeared which astonished me. I felt that my prayer would be answered. My reasoning is freer than my living, my living than my tradition. I have never succeeded in getting away entirely from the dogmatic fear-teaching of parents and Sunday-School."

A few among scientists and also among the other groups, refrained from marking any statement, because the questions " are so phrased that it is practically impossible for thinkers of a certain very advanced but yet quite conservative school to answer them without creating false impressions." Their " real belief is neither expressed by an affirmative nor by a negative answer." The same complaint is voiced by an historian, thus, " The questions relating to God are so formulated as to make it impossible for me to formulate my belief. I would say ' no ' to the first two questions. But *I have a belief*." Others say, similarly: " I fear that I could not state the truth as I see it by merely answering this Q."; or, " I do believe in a God and in prayer, but *not as you have outlined it*."

These persons rebelled against the limitations imposed by my statements upon the expression of their philosophico-religious opinions. They assumed that I wished to find out what they believed, and complained that marking the statements submitted to them would not convey a sufficient idea of their own opinion. As a matter of fact, I was interested merely to discover whether or not they held *the particular beliefs formulated in the Q. What else they might believe, fell outside my present concern.* I

asked, "Do you believe this or not?" The answer these persons made is, in effect, "We cannot reply because we believe something else!" This illogical objection derived strength, I think, from a fear that the denial of God as defined, would class them with "degraded" materialists. That fear has little foundation, for it is well known that to-day the denial in question is as likely as not to point to an idealistic view of life. The conclusions of this book will show what inference I draw from these statistics.

B. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE DEFINITION OF GOD AS CONTAINED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

There remain to be considered a number of cases of misunderstanding A 1 which either prevented marking or led to an erroneous marking of the statements concerning God.

In a long letter a physical scientist declares that the meaning of the expression "answer to prayer" is not clear to him and begs permission to ask whether in the Q. it means: —

"(1) That the specific thing or change among things prayed for shall follow the prayer;

"(2) That the specific thing or change prayed for, or *something which from the point of view of the petitioner is equally desirable*, shall follow the prayer; or

"(3) In addition to the occurrence of (1) or (2) above, the offering of prayer is a *sine qua non* of the occurrence of (1) or (2); or

"(4) Has the term some meaning not covered by the above?"

The meaning of A 1, has been obvious to nearly all my scientific correspondents. They have understood that the specific thing, or change prayed for, or something equally desirable following the prayer, does not constitute an answer in the sense intended, unless *this "thing" or "change" be the result of the will of a superhuman Being moved by the prayer.* The seriousness of this gentleman's desire "to return a useful answer" may be measured by the circumstance that he does not say which one of the several meanings he takes the trouble to distinguish is the one he favors. We may be assured, however, that he is not in a position to mark A 1.

Another physical scientist formulates briefly his beliefs and leaves it to me to place him in the category to which he belongs. He writes: —

"You ask if I believe in God, and I say, 'Certainly,' for otherwise I should be simply asserting my own comprehension of the world and life. Such claims I would be very far from making. . . . Second, you ask if I believe in a God who upsets natural law at the request of prayer. I should say, 'Certainly not.'"

At this point we come to the cause of the writer's unwillingness to mark any of the statements under A. He disclaims any right to assert "that the expression of the desire of any individual could not possibly have any effect upon the course of events. Such expression certainly does have effect upon the course of events since one's own feelings and purposes are only a part of that course." The writer is evidently right in this last affirmation. But since the Q. expressedly includes effects of prayer due

to the action of a divine Being determined by prayer, why did he not mark A 2?

A third physical scientist, who also did not answer, wrote: —

"I should be pleased to learn in some detail just what your first question means. Was it to ask if I believe in a material God who would or might alter or revoke natural law and thus fulfill an expressed request for some material thing which I might desire or request? If so, my answer would have been definitely, 'No.'"

My answer to this correspondent ran somewhat as follows, "The statements of the Q. define neither God nor the kind of request answered by him, as material or spiritual. Why, then, construe in the sense of material? *Any kind of response* proceeding from the will of a God moved to action by man's supplication or desire, falls under 'answer' as defined in A 1."

Two other scientists, and several belonging to other groups, refrained from marking, but declared a belief in a God who does not interfere with his own laws. And six scientists — I shall not speak of similar instances in the other groups — marked A 1 although they also reject God's intervention in natural laws. They say, "The answer is always through the mind of man and never 'breaks' a natural law." Or, "I do not believe in any interruption or subversion of known laws of nature. I do, however, believe in a supreme being." Or, "I should not expect an answer involving any upset of the established order of the physical universe."

Did these six scientists mark correctly in marking

A 1? Any one thinking that because of the action of prayer upon God's will, something will happen that would not otherwise take place, marks correctly when making a cross opposite A 1. But do all these persons entertain that opinion of prayer? If they do, they exclude at least the human mind from the realm in which God cannot, or does not interfere; they are of the opinion of the theologian who teaches that "God can excite new centers of association of ideas, can arrest old associations; all intellectual activity being subservient to feeling. He can produce whatever doctrines and ideas He wishes." [1] This distinction between the relation maintained by God with the physical and with the psychical world is not infrequent among people of some culture. Such is probably the opinion of the person who holds that "the answer is always through the mind of man."

Detailed acquaintance with the orderliness of physical nature dispossessed God of that realm. Will not familiarity with mental and social laws dispossess him of the psychic world also? The statistics of the beliefs of the psychological and sociological groups give, it seems, an affirmative answer to this query. For the psychologist the mental life is as completely within the realm of law as the physical; therefore, if the existence of law is a bar to God's action, he is excluded from intervening in the psychical life of man as well as in the physical universe.

[1] H. Bois: *Inspiration and Revelation; Unpublished Lectures to Theological Students:* 1902–1903. Quoted by E. Ponsoye, in *Expérience et Acte de Foi;* A Doctor's Dissertation: Valence; 1905. Pages 63, 64.

Are we to suppose that all those who marked A 1 without comment accept the possibility of divine intervention both in the physical and in the mental world? Most of them very probably do, but a number limit God's action to the psychic world.[2]

[2] Regarding the term "subjective," I must observe that one psychologist interpreted that term in the strict sense, and therefore marked A 1. He wrote, "I have this belief (A 1) on the basis of personal experience which I can interpret in no other way. But do you not see that the man who does not believe in God, but holds to the strictest form of the mechanical, rather than the spiritual theory of the world, is above all others logically bound to hold that such tremendous facts as the constant prayers of hundreds of millions cannot possibly fail to have objective effects?" The effects the writer calls here "objective," are the results of prayer which pass beyond the praying individual, for instance those affecting other persons and which, nevertheless, are not due to the action of a divinity acting in consequence of the prayer. Prayer exerts, incontrovertibly, such objective effects. But they are usually included in the expression "subjective effect of prayer," as currently used. In any case, statement A 1 implies clearly that the "effect" must come from God, at the instigation of the petitioner.

If we suppose that this writer admits only the strictly subjective and the objective *psychological* effects of prayer, and not the determination of God's will by it, he belongs with those who do *not* believe A 1. Errors resulting from this misunderstanding of the meaning given to "subjective" in the Q., would unduly increase the number of the believers. I do not think, however, that many persons took the word in its strict signification. As a matter of fact, the present instance is the only one which has come to my notice.

I am not sure that, except in the case of the psychologists, the addition to A 1 of the word "objective" (the statement of the Q. would then have read, "I mean more than the subjective and objective *psychological* effects of prayer") would not have caused more trouble than its omission. I find even my philosophic correspondents writing "subjective effects," when obviously they intend to include what the person cited means by "objective."

C. THE INTERPRETATION OF A 2 AND B 2[3]

These statements do not necessarily imply a conviction of the non-existence of God and of immortality. They may mean merely the *absence* of the conviction of their existence. In that case statements A 2 and B 2 have approximately the same meaning as statements A 3 and B 3 (agnosticism or absence of definite belief). But, although the Q. asks that every statement "true for you" be marked, only a small percentage of those who marked 3, marked also 2. One may, therefore, probably regard the majority of those who marked A 2 and B 2, and not also A 3 and B 3, as desirous of doing more than affirm the absence of the belief in God and immortality, they may be taken to have intended to express positive belief in their non-existence.

Readers may ask themselves why I did not formulate statements which would have separated more definitely those who merely lack the beliefs expressed in A 1 and B 1, from those ready to affirm their falsity. But can a sharp line of demarcation be drawn between these two attitudes? Evidently not; the terms, *belief*, *unbelief*, *doubt*, *uncertainty*, are susceptible of endless gradation. "The questions do not provide for degrees and intensities," complains one of those who returned a blank Q. This is unfortunately true, but in attempting to refine, I should probably have made matters worse. As a matter of fact, few were seriously troubled by the

[3] A 2: I do not believe in God as defined above. B 2: I believe neither in conditional nor in unconditional immortality of the person.

indefiniteness of these terms, and my purpose was as well, perhaps better served by the statements of the Q., as by any others; for, the persons who could affirm a belief in the two great propositions of Christianity are actually separated from those who could not; and, in addition, those who were willing to do more than affirm absence of belief and doubt, were enabled to do so, and usually did so, by marking A 2 and B 2, without marking also A 3 and B 3.

Something of the variety of attitudes and the fluidity of the meanings which should be covered by a theoretically, if not practically, perfect Q. is suggested in the following extracts from two letters written by eminent psychologists: —

"Question 3 really represents my position, which would rather be agnostic in the purely negative sense of the word, not the positive and aggressive sense. My feeling is that for all I know, there may be a personal God who answers prayer, and there may be a personal immortality. The surface facts do not seem to me to favor either, but I have been wrong so many times in my life that I am emphatically not ready to deny the possibility of either. What the possibilities of the universe are, is surely one of the things I do not know."

"These things have for the past several years become so entirely indifferent to me — save as matters for psychological study — that I find it difficult to answer the questions. Ten years ago I should have said I do not believe — I am an agnostic (possibly with reservations as to precise definition) — I do not believe — I do not desire. Now it seems to me that, while there is no chance of my ever be-

lieving or desiring, to say that I do not believe and do not desire is to make too positive a statement. What I mean is that, if I could bring myself to any serious consideration, I might decide (and probably should decide) No, again; but serious consideration strikes me as waste of time; these things are just non-existent for me; I can no more say: 'I do not desire immortality' than I can say, 'I do not desire to reign in hell.' I may say, 'I do not believe in God' is a thing I should never think of saying, because it implies some interest in the question."

D. THE MARKING OF A 3 AND B 3[4] IN THE FIRST AND IN THE SECOND FORMULATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Those who marked A 3 and B 3 occasionally explained their meaning by phrases such as these: "Neither belief nor disbelief"; "In the dark"; "I mean merely the absence of belief"; "I have no sufficient knowledge about it." Three *know* that "it is impossible for any one to know anything about such matters." An attitude representative of a large number of "agnostics" is expressed in these words, "I believe in a spiritual life here and now. The trend of the universe is towards the higher and better. Righteousness here is sufficient for me. Of God and the future I am ignorant. The best impulses of man are not meaningless. I am content, I believe, not to know where evidence is lacking."

It appears very clearly from the answers that A 3 in the first Q. was marked by agnostics in the

[4] A 3 and B 3, in the first Q.: "I am an agnostic"; in the second, "I have no definite belief concerning this question."

exact sense of the term, and also by persons who, without denying the possibility of knowledge, are themselves in doubt. It is equally clear that in the revised Q., A 3 was marked not only by persons with indefinite views, but also by genuine agnostics. I have therefore put all the answers to A 3 and B 3 under the double head "Agnostics and Doubters."

E. THE INTERPRETATION OF "PERSONAL IMMORTALITY"

It was not intended that believers in continuation after death without preservation of the consciousness of identity should mark B 1. If any have, the number of disbelievers recorded in the tables is smaller than it should be.

The anticipation of continued individual existence without the preservation of the consciousness of identity satisfies neither the desire for justice nor that for the perpetuation of love and friendship; it is not the immortality for which the human heart commonly yearns, nor is it the Christian conception of it.

F. SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE FAILURES TO MARK THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND OF ITS INTERPRETATION

The 14.7 per cent. of scientists who returned blank Q., include eight per cent. who could not answer for physical reasons (death, severe illness, or absence), or else gave some clue to their opinions. The utterances of most of the latter are sufficiently explicit (as the reader may have judged for himself by the preceding quotations) to show that their be-

liefs, were they entered upon the statistical tables, would increase rather than decrease the proportion of non-believers in A 1.

A similar statement is true regarding the part of the Q. dealing with immortality. The number of those who marked B 2 and B 3 is less than the whole number of those who do not believe B 1. Why, for instance, did the person who wrote the following refrain from marking any of the statements on immortality? "I have no opinion and do not care to the extent of striving to understand the unknowable." He could, it seems, have marked B 3. Another, who also refrained from marking the Q., declared the subject "an open one." Why, then, not mark the affirmation of "no definite belief" made in B 3? The same question may be asked of others who make similar remarks, and in particular of the person who calls himself a "materialist." I may add that only once did this term appear in the correspondence occasioned by this inquiry.

As to the failure to return the Q. (10 per cent.), an indeterminate number is to be ascribed to death, to critical illness, or to absence. The information derived from the comments of those who returned but did not mark the statements, and in particular of those who answered only at the second request (see the discussion of table XXIII), indicates that, had the remainder of this 10 per cent. answered, the proportion of disbelievers would very probably have been increased.

The proportions of Q. not returned, or returned blank in the other groups, will be mentioned in the proper place. In every case, except that of the his-

torians, they will be found to be less, and in some cases very much less, than for the scientists.

The foregoing survey of the causes of failure to answer should not leave us under the impression that on the whole the Q. was frowned upon. After all, the proportion of those who raised objections is small. Two of these are conspicuous for their picturesque language:

"A man must be lacking a job or a mind to go into this business."

"This is a lot of damned rot."

Strange as it may seem, these two persons marked the Q.; the first A 1 and B 1; the other, A 2 and B 2. A large number wrote approvingly and congratulated the author upon having undertaken this research; the great majority complied with the request for information and otherwise remained silent. In the main, the reception accorded to this inquiry and its results should make impossible in the future the rough and ready adverse judgment which many are in the habit of formulating as to the possibility of obtaining, by the *questionnaire* method, definite and reliable knowledge upon questions such as those under investigation here.

The chief result I hoped to achieve by means of the statements of part A of the Q. should now be evident. I wanted to separate the believers in a personal God from all others, even from those who, rejecting that belief, entertain nevertheless a spiritual conception of ultimate reality.

In the sphere of practical religion gods are defined by the attributes implied in their worship.

Now, the worship of the God of the Christian Church, in all its branches, implies a Being in direct, affective, and intellectual communication with man. No one who has ever entered a Christian Church and opened a Prayer Book, whether Roman Catholic, Protestant, or Unitarian, can fail to know that when both the physical and the psychic world are conceived as subject to immutable laws; or when these laws, although regarded as not absolutely fixed, are no longer thought of as in any degree subject to human desires acting upon a Being able to gratify them, Christian liturgies and hymnologies have lost their object. In such a world, prayer for rain, for protection from sin, for pardon; songs of praise and adoration — these, and nearly everything else in the church services, have become at best atrophied survivals of once potent means of salvation.

I am well aware that there are those who say, "No; these things have not lost their meaning, they have assumed another meaning." Why should earnest men quibble? The practical question raised by this research is precisely whether those for whom these "things" have changed their meaning, *as they actually have*, should nevertheless strive to preserve the established forms of worship.

II. THE SCIENTISTS

This part of Investigation C is based upon answers received from 1000 persons chosen by a rule of chance from *American Men of Science*. It is separated, for a reason already indicated, into two divisions of 500 each; and these again fall into two subdivisions including 300 persons of lesser and 200

of greater distinction.[5] Every other group of investigation C was likewise divided into "lesser" and "greater" men. In one division of the scientists, I kept separate the answers of the physical, from those of the biological scientists, and was thus able to show what influence training in these sciences has upon the belief in God and immortality.

[5] The 300 less eminent men of the first division were selected by taking the first name on every other page of *American Men of Science;* and in addition, as this did not provide the desired number, the last name on every fifteenth page. In case one of the names so found was starred, the first unstarred name following, or preceding was taken instead. The 200 eminent men were found by taking every fifth starred name in the volume. Since there are in the whole directory 1000 starred names, this method produced the desired 200 names.

In the second division, the 300 less eminent men were found by taking the second name on every other page, and the name before the last on every fifteenth page. When a starred name, or a name which had been used in the first division was encountered, it was replaced by the nearest available name. The 200 eminent men were found by taking every fifth starred name, beginning at the end of the volume.

I left my correspondents in ignorance of the distinction I was making in lesser and greater men. A slight difference in the size of the Q. was used as a means of keeping separate the answers from the two classes. The answers from the physical scientists were kept distinct from those of the biologists by a difference in the printing of the Q.

The choice of the 1000 starred names in *American Men of Science* was made by Dr. James McKeen Cattell with the cooperation of twelve of the most distinguished men in each science. From these men, Dr. Cattell asked and received, for each science, twelve lists containing a definite number of names arranged in the order of their distinction, according to the opinion of the makers of the lists. From the twelve lists in each science, Dr. Cattell compiled, according to a method described in an Appendix to *American Men of Science,* the lists of names starred in that volume.

The sciences and the occupations represented in the first division are indicated in chart III. The upper figure in each square of the table refers to the lesser; the lower one, to the greater men. It appears that college and university professors make up over 60 per cent. of the total. The next two larger groups are of men employed by the government (12 per cent.), and in industries (11 per cent.).

The Beliefs in God and Immortality.— In the two divisions of scientists taken together, the believers in God (A 1) amount to 41.8 per cent. of the number of those who answered. If we put together the *disbelievers*, (41.5 per cent.), i. e., those who marked A 2, and the *agnostics* or *doubters*, i. e., those who marked A 3, we get 58.2 per cent. of *non-believers*.[6]

If the lesser men are compared with the greater, the number of believers become, for the former, 48.2 per cent. of the lesser men who answered; and for the greater men, 31.6 per cent. of the greater men who answered. Thus it appears that, among the lesser men, believers and non-believers are nearly equal, while over two thirds of the greater men are not able to affirm belief in the God of the Christian churches. The reliability of these figures, when taken to indicate a difference due to intellectual ability and knowledge, and to traits making for success in the professions concerned, might be questioned if quite similar differences were not found in

[6] I shall use this term throughout, to designate by one term both those who marked A2 (the disbelievers) and those who marked A3 (the agnostics or doubters).

CHART III

OCCUPATIONS OF THE MEN OF SCIENCE OF DIVISION I

	Physical Mathemat. Sciences	Biolog. Sciences	Psychol. and Philos.	Sociolo. and Educat.	Totals in per cents.
College and Univ. Professors	107 73	57 52	6 5	3 5	58. 68.
Government service	26 17	10 6	— —	— —	12. 12.
Industry	38 12	3 —	— —	— 1	14. 6.
Lower School Teachers	7 1	4 —	2 —	— —	4. —
Physicians and Surgeons	— —	10 3	— —	— —	3. 1.5
Museums	1 —	2 6	— 1	6 —	3. 3.5
Research	5 9	2 2	— 1	— 1	2. 7.
Unclassified	6 1	3 3	— —	— —	3. 2.

Notes: — *The upper figure in each space refers to the lesser; the lower one, to the greater men of science.*

The percentages (last column to the right) are of the total number of lesser or greater men, as the case may be.

It will be noticed that a few psychologists, sociologists, and educators got into this division. This was not intended. In the second division physical and biological scientists only were included. With this difference, this table may stand also, in a general way, for the second division.

every one of the other groups, both regarding God and immortality.

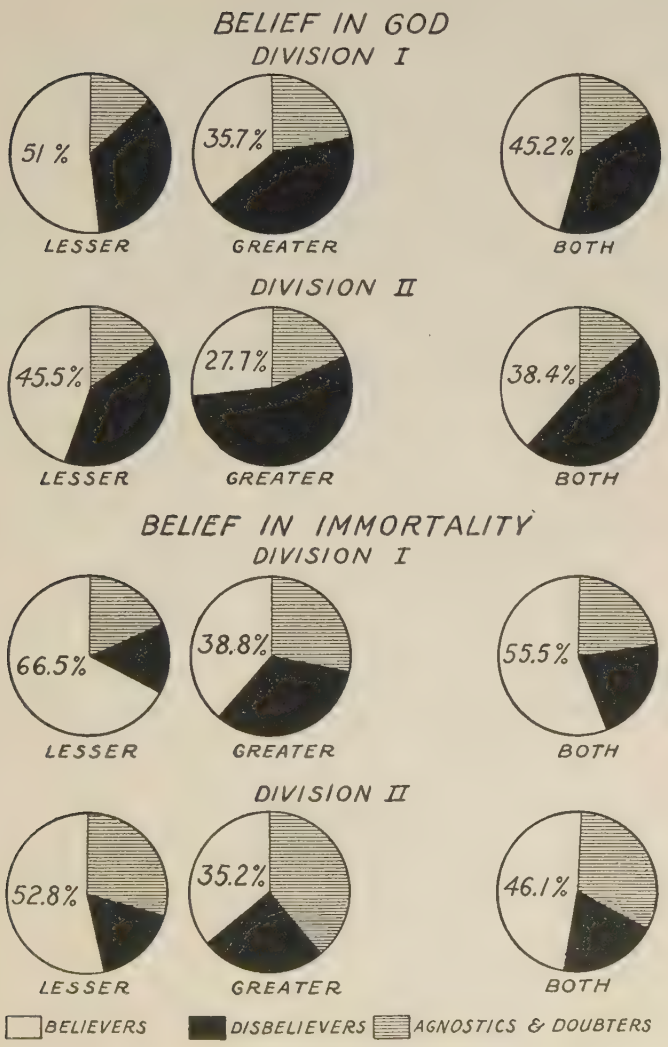
In this group, as well as in every other, the number of believers in immortality is larger than the number of believers in God. This is an interesting fact. When the two divisions are taken together, the believers in immortality are found to be very nearly equal to the non-believers, the proportions are respectively 50.6 per cent. and 49.4 per cent. If we compare the lesser with the greater men, we get 59.3 per cent. of lesser, against 36.9 per cent. of greater believers.

Among the greater men, believers, disbelievers, and agnostics or doubters, number each about one third of the total number of those who returned an answer.

If, instead of taking the two divisions together, we consider them separately, differences of the same kind, but a little less for the first, and somewhat larger for the second division are to be observed with regard to both beliefs (see chart IV). The difference between the lesser and the greater men of the second division is shown by the figures 45.5 per cent. and 27.7 per cent., for believers in God; and by 52.8 per cent. and 35.2 per cent., for believers in immortality.

It is noteworthy that the number of those who announce agnostic or indefinite opinions concerning immortality is greater than the number of disbelievers. This is especially marked among the greater men of the second division: disbelievers, 25.4 per cent.; agnostics and doubters, 43.7 per cent. They feel much less hesitation in affirming disbelief

CHART IV


BELIEF IN GOD
DIVISION I
51 %
LESSER
35.7%
GREATER
45.2%
BOTH
DIVISION II
45.5%
LESSER
27.7%
GREATER
38.4%
BOTH
BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY
DIVISION I
66.5%
LESSER
38.8%
GREATER
55.5%
BOTH
DIVISION II
52.8%
LESSER
35.2%
GREATER
46.1%
BOTH
BELIEVERS
DISBELIEVERS
AGNOSTICS & DOUBTERS

in God: disbelievers, 52.7 per cent.; doubtful opinions, 20.9 per cent.[7] It would be interesting to know how far the recent efforts of the Psychical Researchers have led to a shift from disbelief in immortality to a suspension of judgment.

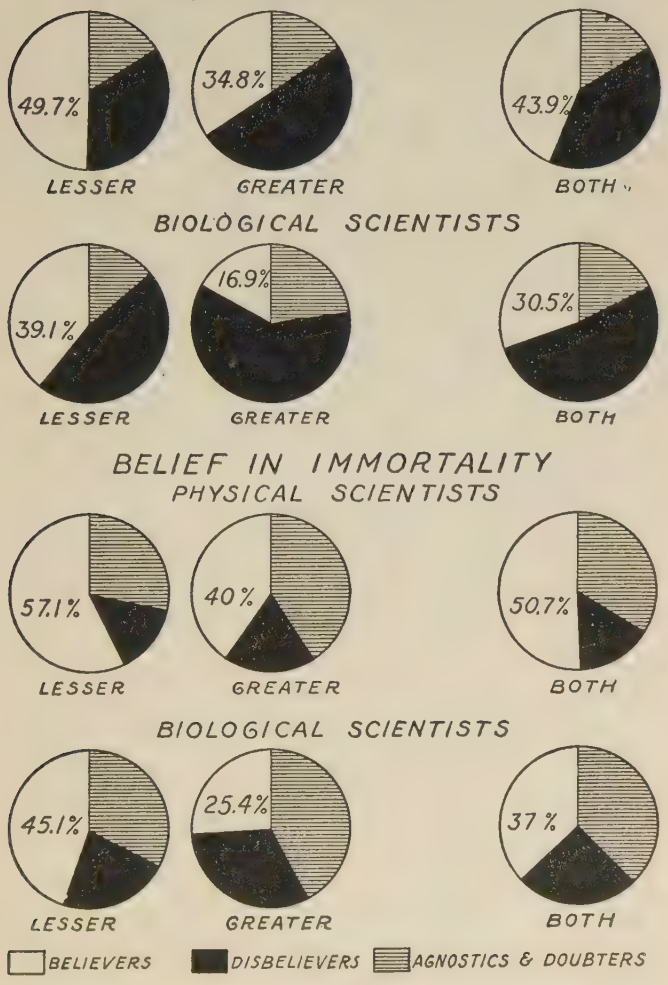
Comparison of the Physical with the Biological Scientists; Second Division.— The biologists produce a much smaller number of believers in God and in immortality than the physicists (see chart V). The figures are, for the believers in God: physicists, 43.9 per cent; biologists, 30.5 per cent; and for the believers in immortality, 50.7 per cent. against 37 per cent.

There are fewer believers among the greater men, whether physicists or biologists. The smallest percentage of believers is found among the greater biologists; they count only 16.9 per cent. of believers in God and 25.4 per cent. of believers in immortality. As many as 59.3 per cent. of greater biologists express disbelief in God, and 31.7 per cent. in immortality. The discussion of these interesting figures had best be deferred until the results from the other groups have been set forth.

[7] In several instances the percentages given in the text for believers, disbelievers, and agnostics or doubters, sum up to more than one hundred. The reason of this anomaly is that some persons marked both disbelief and agnosticism or doubt (statements 2 and 3). Among the men of science, for instance, 15 lesser and 11 greater men of division I, and 5 lesser and 2 greater men of division II marked both A2 and A3; in no other group did this happen as frequently.

In the graphic representations I counted as disbelievers all those who marked both statements.

CHART V


BELIEF IN GOD
PHYSICAL SCIENTISTS
49.7%
LESSER
34.8%
GREATER
43.9%
BOTH
BIOLOGICAL SCIENTISTS
39.1%
LESSER
16.9%
GREATER
30.5%
BOTH
BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY
PHYSICAL SCIENTISTS
57.1%
LESSER
40%
GREATER
50.7%
BOTH
BIOLOGICAL SCIENTISTS
45.1%
LESSER
25.4%
GREATER
37%
BOTH
BELIEVERS
DISBELIEVERS
AGNOSTICS & DOUBTERS

The Desire for Immortality.— Among savage and semi-civilized populations every one believes in immortality because directly observable facts seem to establish continuation with absolute certainty; but no one desires to enter the other life. With us it is different. Of those who answered my Q. all who profess belief in immortality, with the exception of three in each division, express also a desire for it. Even of those who do not believe, a considerable number would find great solace in the assurance of a future life.

"I should be very glad if the evidence seemed sufficient to warrant marking the first statement in each part of the Q., since to my mind there would be considerable comfort in both beliefs," writes one of my correspondents. Another, who has felt obliged to mark A 2 and B 2 because he has "not found the slightest trace of evidence" for God or immortality "in the course of 54 years of life," confesses that he "sincerely abhors" his position.

The facts and the arguments known to my correspondents are apparently quite insufficient to convince all those who would find satisfaction in the expectation of an after life.

With the normally constituted individual, the realization of the absence of ground for a belief usually abates, and even removes the desire for it. Such is apparently the experience of the person who would desire immortality if he considered it "at all probable." The reasonable man tries to suppress desire for the unattainable, and sometimes succeeds. Several marginal notes on the Q. affirm this triumph of reason. But the desire for immortality

is usually too strong, either because deep-rooted in human nature or kept alive artificially, to yield to lack of evidence. In the second division the number of non-believers who desire immortality is equal to 20 per cent. of all those who marked any of the statements concerning immortality.

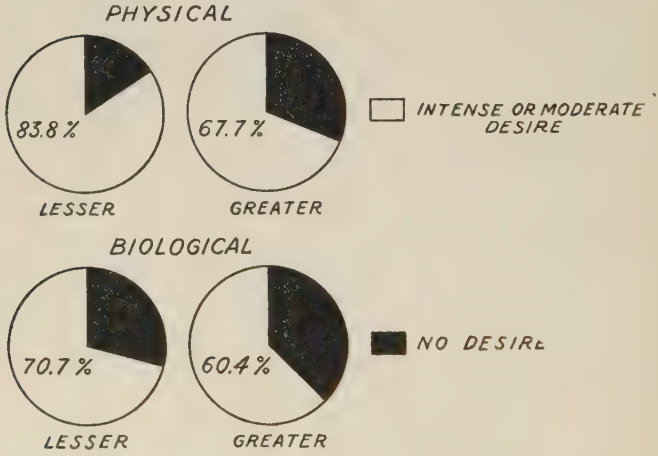
In the two divisions taken together, only two disbelievers desire immortality intensely; while of those who marked B 3, 29 desire it intensely. This fact should be construed both as indicating the destructive effect of disbelief upon desire, and the influence of strong desire upon belief.

The prospect of immortality leaves many believers very nearly indifferent. They say, "I almost never think of it"; or, "It does not seem to influence my life"; and the like. In order to form some opinion of the vitality of this belief, we should consult the answers to the statements concerning desire for immortality. Twenty-seven per cent. of those who in the two divisions marked any of the statements, do not at all desire immortality, 39 per cent. desire it moderately, and 34 per cent. intensely. (For the statistics of the lesser and greater men considered separately, see chart VI.)

For some unstated reason, 24 persons who marked A 1 and B 1 left B 4 unmarked. The only information available concerning these persons is contained in two remarks: "I do not think about immortality"; "I am indifferent to it." One may conjecture that still others of these 24 were in the same situation. They must have found all three statements under B 4 too decidedly affirmative to represent fairly their attitude, for they neither desire

immortality intensely, nor moderately, nor yet do they desire it not at all. They are rather, on the whole, indifferent. In any case, it may be assumed that, had they felt keen desire, they would have indicated it.

CHART VI



So few genuinely old-fashioned utterances are to be found in my correspondence, that I quote this model of pious resignation: "I desire immortality in so far as it is the Lord's will." A disbeliever says curtly, "I would dread it."

III. THE HISTORIANS

The last membership list of the American Historical Association was published in 1911. It contains about 2800 names, a part only of whom are professional historians. In order to make this

group as nearly as possible comparable with the men of science, I limited the investigation to professors of history in colleges and universities, leaving out, however, the professors of history in Roman Catholic institutions and all professors of Church history. The list thus prepared numbered 375 persons. One hundred of these were selected as greater historians. Of the remainder, 102 were singled out according to a rule of chance similar to the one followed in the case of the scientists, and designated "lesser men." [8] The other names were disregarded.

The Questionnaires not Returned, or Returned Unanswered.—Six Q. were returned unopened, and 33 others were never heard from. We may probably account for this large proportion on the ground that the membership list of the American Historical Association which I used, although the most recent one, was over three years old. Many of the Q. not heard from had no doubt been addressed to persons who had died or were absent from home or were seriously ill.

Of the returned Q., twelve from greater, and seven from lesser historians, were blank. But here again, as in the case of the scientists, comments make it

[8] I do not claim that these lists are perfect. Limitation of time induced me to be satisfied with a list of greater men compiled from two initial lists prepared by competent persons; more was not necessary. *The only criticism that might be directed against the statistics on the ground that certain names were not accurately ranked, is that the differences shown to exist between the lesser and the greater historians are smaller than they would have been had the lists been more carefully prepared.* This criticism I would accept, with the reservation that, in my opinion, the error is a very small one indeed.

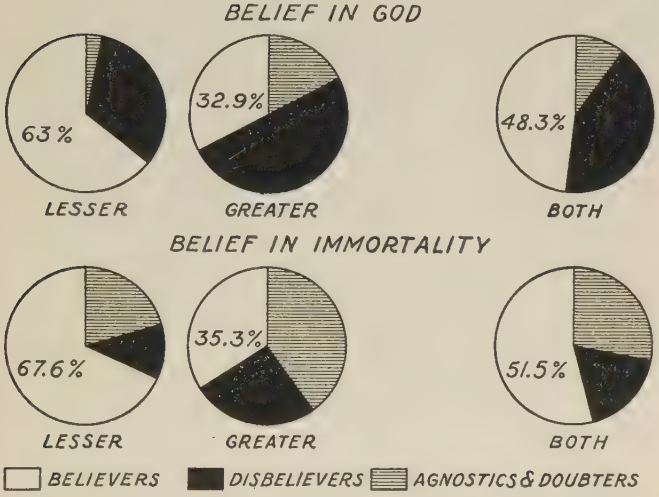
possible to classify a considerable number which would on the whole increase the percentage of non-believers. Persons who will not put their names "to a written creed," or "do not care to make any definite statement," are in any case not ardent believers in propositions A1 and B1. They could not have said, as did one of their number who marked these statements: "With me it is not only a conviction; it is a fellowship and an experience of great reality." The tables include, however, only those who marked the statements. Four of those addressed were reported away and one as dead. Other blank Q. probably fall into the same categories. For a detailed discussion of the statistical significance of the Q. returned unanswered, I beg to refer the reader to a preceding section.

The Beliefs in God and in Immortality.— There is little difference between the greater historians (see chart VII) and the greater scientists; only about one-third of each believe in God. The proportions are not very different regarding immortality (see chart VII). If, however, the lesser historians are compared with the lesser scientists, a marked difference appears. The former include a much larger number of believers than the latter: 63 per cent. against 48 per cent. A similar disparity exists with regard to immortality.

In round numbers, the proportion of historian non-believers in God among greater men is about equal to that of believers among the lesser men, namely two-thirds of the whole number of those who answered. Of the 36.9 per cent. of non-believing

lesser men, as many as 34.2 per cent.; and of the 67.1 per cent. of non-believing greater men, as many as 50 per cent. affirmed positive disbelief in God (A2). The contrast between the lesser and the greater men is hardly less regarding immortality.

CHART VII



Three who marked A1 disclaim any belief in "miraculous intervention with the laws of nature," or "in suspension of natural laws." Two affirm a hope of immortality. One of these marked neither B1 nor B2; the other marked B2.

The Desire for Immortality.— The figures reveal nothing of general interest not apparent in the figures for the scientists (chart VI). Forty-five per cent. of the non-believers desire immortality

either moderately or intensely. Of the believers, only one affirms the absence of desire. The number of greater men who do not desire immortality is nearly double that of the lesser men in the same situation.[9]

IV. THE SOCIOLOGISTS

The last membership list of the American Sociological Association (published in 1913) contains approximately 580 names, a large number of whom are of persons who may be called professional sociologists neither in the practical nor in the academic sense. I thought I might, without increasing the total number addressed and without giving up the comparison of lesser with greater professors, enlarge the interest of the inquiry by making a group of sociologists who are not teachers of sociology. Accordingly, I prepared with the help of two competent collaborators a list of 23 (it should have been 25) greater professors, and I marked 25 of the remaining professors according to a rule of chance.[10] Of the non-teaching sociologists, 149

[9] One who did not mark belief, qualifies thus his affirmation of desire, "if [the other life] is not radically different from the present." Another who marked both conditional immortality and moderate desire, adds, "but merely on account of the instinctive clinging to life, and not from any rational conception of the nature of the life hereafter. Annihilation is preferable either to hell or to singing psalms in heaven." One who marked B3 finds it impossible to answer the questions concerning desire without defining the conditions of immortality. A person who accepts "the Roman Catholic Church doctrine" abstained from marking any statement under B.

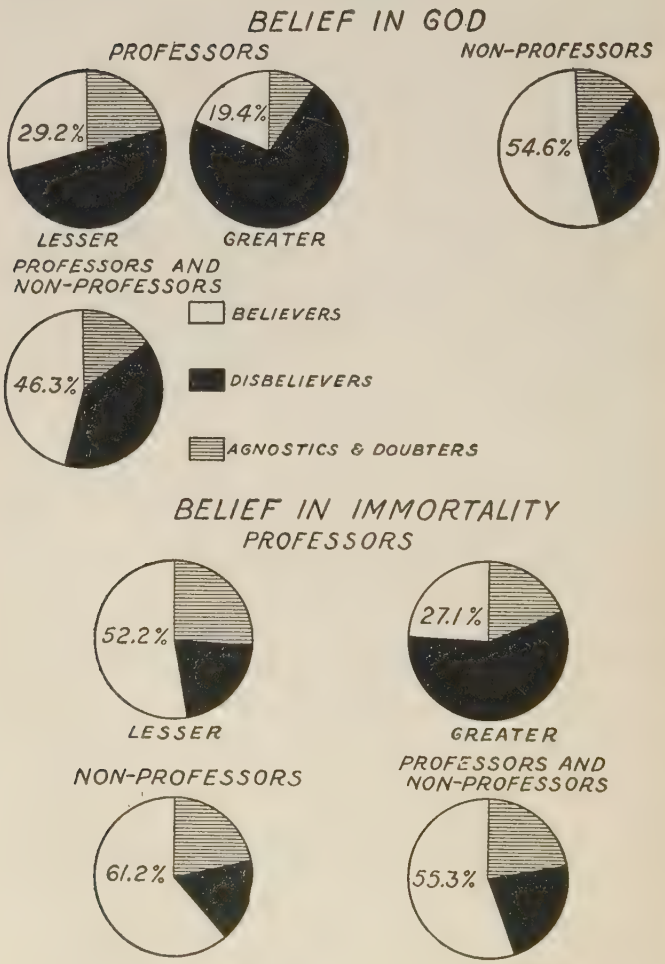
[10] The Russell Sage Foundation was included among the colleges and universities. Professors in Roman Catholic institutions were excluded.

were selected, also according to a rule of chance. I had thus three lists, two of which were of professors, numbering altogether 197 names.

The Questionnaires not returned or returned unanswered.— The percentage of Q. not returned is much less for the sociologists than for the historians and less also than for the scientists. Shall we credit sociologists with deeper interest and greater confidence in statistical investigations? Certainly it is true that the statistical method of research is the sociologist's very own, and that he is much more generally familiar with its possibilities than the scientist or the historian. However that may be, every one of the 23 greater sociologists returned the Q. and only three of them were blank. Of the 25 lesser men, 24 filled the Q., one only remaining unaccounted for. The non-teaching sociologists did not do so well. Fourteen per cent. of these ignored the Q. Four Q. were returned blank, two of these because of the death of the addressee; a third contained the following, "All wise men are of one religion, but this wise man never tells which." I venture the opinion that wise men of this sort are not in a position to mark A1. Five Q. came back unopened, with the inscription, "Not found."

The Beliefs in God and in Immortality.— The professors of sociology separate themselves sharply from the non-academic sociologists. Regarding the belief in God, the latter stand about midway between the lesser scientists and the lesser historians (54.6 per cent. of believers; see chart VIII).

CHART VIII


BELIEF IN GOD
PROFESSORS
NON-PROFESSORS
29.2%
19.4%
54.6%
LESSER
GREATER
PROFESSORS AND
NON-PROFESSORS
46.3%
BELIEVERS
DISBELIEVERS
AGNOSTICS & DOUBTERS
BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY
PROFESSORS
52.2%
27.1%
LESSER
GREATER
NON-PROFESSORS
PROFESSORS AND
NON-PROFESSORS
61.2%
55.3%

Whereas of the 45 professors who marked the Q. no more than 24.4 per cent. are believers in God. When the greater professors are considered separately, the difference in the number of believers and non-believers is accentuated; only 19.4 per cent. of them marked A1. These figures are approximately the same as those for the greater biologists.

It is not difficult to explain the particular place occupied by the sociologists and the biologists in this investigation. When the student of physical laws has come to accept determinism in the physical world, he may and often does keep for the less generally understood biological and sociological phenomena the traditional belief in divine intervention. The biologist and the sociologist, however, better acquainted with the natural causes of these phenomena than their brothers of the physical sciences, find it just as impossible to admit God's action in the biological and sociological domains as in the physical.

The figures referring to immortality suggest no particular comment. As in the other groups, the number of believers in immortality is greater than the number of believers in God. The features characteristic of preceding groups reappear here. Of the non-professing sociologists who marked B1, one believes merely "in the possibility" of immortality; and another treats immortality "as a working hypothesis."

The Desire for Immortality.— The only point deserving special mention is the large proportion of the non-professional group who desire immortality

intensely. In all other respects, the more general remarks made with reference to the corresponding figures for historians and scientists apply also to the sociologists.[11]

V. THE PSYCHOLOGISTS

The list of members of the American Psychological Association for 1914 contains 288 names. I eliminated the names of all those who do not teach psychology (making an exception, however, in favor of those engaged in scientific psychological research), those teaching in Roman Catholic institutions and exclusively in medical schools,[12] and those who are decidedly educators or philosophers rather than psychologists. This last exclusion was the more appropriate that I intended to investigate separately the beliefs of philosophers.

[11] From the comments it appears that several abstained from marking B4 because the "conditions" were not defined. They said, "I desire immortality under some conditions." Others refrained from expressing complete absence of desire because they were merely "indifferent." On the other hand, one who had marked moderate desire describes his attitude as one of "practical indifference." In one case the desire is a "matter of intellectual interest" pure and simple. I add the comments of two persons, neither of whom marked B1, although they both expressed desire for immortality.

"The answer to B4 depends largely upon my physical condition and the weather. The day when one feels immortal, one intensely desires immortality."

"I desire fullness of life, not all its qualities and activities; life in all its best relations and noble purposes. The desire involves immortality, though its contents is qualitative rather than temporal."

[12] My reason for eliminating those teaching exclusively in medical schools, is that these men are usually physiologists rather than psychologists.

In a list thus reduced to about two-thirds of its original length, fifty names were singled out as those of the more distinguished psychologists; and, marking the remaining names according to a rule of chance, I obtained 57 lesser psychologists.

The Questionnaires not Returned or Returned Unanswered.— Four greater men did not return the Q. ("absence" was the cause in one instance). Eight returned unanswered blanks. Of the lesser psychologists, none failed to return the Q.; and, of the four who returned blanks, two explained at some length their views. The letter of one of these was published in a preceding section.[13]

The Belief in God.— The proportion of believers (24.2 per cent., see chart IX) is almost the same as among the teaching sociologists (24.4 per cent.). The greater psychologists yield the smallest proportion of believers of any of the groups investigated, namely 13.2 per cent. This result bears out the explanation I ventured as to the differences in the number of believers observed among the several classes of scientists.

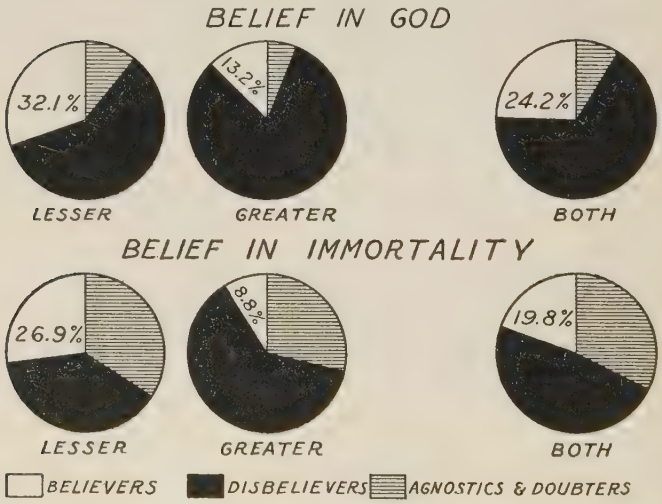
The Belief in Immortality.— The most striking fact brought to light by chart IX is that whereas in every preceding group the number of believers in

[13] In the selection of the greater men in this field, I was assisted in the same way as in the preparation of the list of greater historians.

To three psychologists who raised objections to the form of the Q., I sent another set of questions prepared for the philosophers. One psychologist answered that form.

immortality is substantially larger, and, in the case of the sociologists, very much larger than that of the believers in God, in the present group the number of believers in immortality is clearly less than that of the believers in God. Only three of the greater psychologists declare a belief either in unconditional or in conditional immortality.

CHART IX



Taken altogether, the teaching sociologists give 49 per cent. of believers in immortality as against 24.4 per cent. of believers in God; the psychologists, 19.8 per cent. as against 24.2 per cent.[14]

[14] One psychologist replaced the word "belief" by "hope." Another who, like the preceding, marked none of the statements under B, says, "I think it likely, however, that my psychological awareness of the world and of what I perceive and conceive as myself will cease at death." That is also

From these figures one may fairly draw this conclusion: in the present phase of psychological science, the greater one's knowledge of psychic life, the more difficult it is to retain the traditional belief in the continuation of personality after death.

The Desire for Immortality.— Although the number of those who do not desire immortality (47.2 per cent.) is far greater in this than in any other group, nevertheless the desire remains, not only in the small number of believers (with one exception), but, in addition, in 34.7 per cent. of the non-believers.

VI. THE PHILOSOPHERS

I intended from the first to cap the preceding statistics with a study of American philosophers. The Q. was, however, formulated primarily for scientific men. It proved, on the whole, satisfactory to them and also to the historians, to the sociologists, and even to the psychologists. As it was desirable to keep throughout to the same statements, I then ventured to send the same Q. to the philosophers also. But the number of objectors was so considerable that, after some correspondence with philosophical friends, I prepared another set

the opinion of the one who describes God as "incarnated in him and in others." He thinks it "likely" that consciousness of the consciousness of our earthly self will cease. Is that also the opinion of the one who marked B1 and wrote, "I believe that there is something corresponding to personal immortality, although I cannot make out a satisfactory belief as to its nature"? Should this person not admit the continuation of the consciousness of identity, he ought not to have marked B1.

of questions. My purpose remaining the same, the new statements were so shaped as to make the answers comparable with those already obtained.

A philosopher who had warned me that the first form would prove a failure, thought the new formulation "a great improvement." A large proportion of those addressed did in fact send in answers without any expressed reservation; but a disconcertingly large number returned blanks; and, what was worse, in several instances the comments accompanying certain marked questions, especially A1, showed that the same markings could not be taken to express in all cases the same view.

The circumstances in which I found myself at the time prevented a further effort to formulate statements which would have met more exactly the needs of the case. How difficult it would have been to produce something adequate without transforming altogether the scope of my inquiry appears from the following comment.

"I do not know what is meant in this circular by the terms 'a God,' 'the course of nature,' 'the divine,' 'personal immortality,' 'state of development.' That is, I do not know in what sense Professor Leuba uses these terms in this connection. . . . It would therefore be useless for me to add my statistical contribution.— This reply stands for no lack of interest or of wish to cooperate."

Another, also a well disposed correspondent, writes, "I would answer, if I could, but I cannot, believing as I do in a *meaning* for all these things, but not in the apparent meaning of the questions." This philosopher differs from the preceding in that

he knows what the *apparent* meanings of the statements are; but because he does not accept those meanings, he cannot answer, though he would like to.

If the reader will recall the many quotations I have made in the preceding pages, and in particular the letters from two psychologists on pages 243 and 244, he will be amazed at the difference in understanding — unless it be something else — that separates philosophers from other men, even from eminent psychologists. For, in these letters there appears not even the shadow of difficulty in interpreting the Q. To the writers, it is as clear as the questions of the Census Bureau.

One of the potent reasons for failure to answer has already been mentioned. Those addressed imagined that I was preparing statistics of philosophical opinions on God and his relation to nature and to man; whereas my sole interest was to find out how many of them accepted a *particular* conception of God and of his relation to man. As the statements did not provide the scope necessary to an expression of their philosophy, these persons found the Q. "inadequate." This seems to have been the feeling of the one who wrote: —

"I do not find it possible to answer your questions by *Yes* or *No*. I have very deep convictions in reference to them all, but I should feel about answering them with the plain *Yes* or *No*, very much the way I would feel about answering the articles of the creed, that any *Yes* or *No* was not quite adequate. I have serious distrust of the statistical method of promoting any matters of this sort, and

I feel sure that these questions can hardly bring to light any adequate information about the general spiritual attitude of present day men."

A number of those who returned blanks should, it seems, have found it possible to fill out the Q.; that one, certainly, who wrote, "I believe its effect (prayer) is only æsthetic, analogous to those of self-expression through lyric poetry or, possibly, dramatic poetry."

But the fatal defect, for statistical purposes, of the philosophers' returns, is that the marking of A1 does not express a uniform meaning. This appears conclusively in comments such as the following: —

"I believe in a certain summation of effects wrought by prayer — which is, of course, to be distinguished from the belief that objective conditions may be altered by the mere weight of petitions. In a universe in which, as I believe, the ordinary distinction between 'subjective' and 'objective' is a practical and methodological one, there is no hard and fast distinction between the 'unalterable' and objective conditions and those which are subject to the human will. Prayer is a potent influence in fashioning the human will, and a world in which men pray should differ profoundly from a world in which men do not."

Agreeing as I do with all this, I unhesitatingly deny belief in A1, instead of affirming it as this person does. In so doing, I find myself in agreement with practically all my non-philosophical correspondents, and doubtless also with most philosophers

holding the view of prayer defined in the above quotation.

Another who also marked A1, added, "In some sense, yes — or at least I am inclined so to believe." But when he came to the statement, "I have no definite belief, etc." (A4 of Q. for philosophers) he wrote, "Perhaps this comes nearer my position than any of the other statements. *I do not believe in prayer as a means of getting something, either external goods or desirable psychological states.*" [15] Now, it seems clear that the sense in which this person marked A1 is not that given it by the non-philosophers.

VII. COMPARISON OF THE SIGNED WITH THE UNSIGNED ANSWERS, AND OF THE ANSWERS TO THE FIRST WITH THE ANSWERS TO THE SECOND REQUESTS

Although signatures were not requested, a large number of the respondents put their names to their answers. In every group the proportion of signatures among the answers to the first request is considerably larger than among the answers to the second.[16] This might have been foreseen, for many who waited for the second appeal must have answered reluctantly.

Who are most likely to sign, unasked, a statement of religious belief? Not those in disagreement with

[15] The italics are mine.

[16] The percentages of signed answers to the first and to the second requests were, for the scientists of division II, respectively, 41.9 per cent. and 21.4 per cent.; for the historians, 41.6 per cent. and 13.9 per cent.; and for the sociologists, 33.6 per cent. and 27.1 per cent.

officially accredited convictions. Chart X shows what a strong influence upon the readiness to sign the answers is exerted by the thought of orthodox opinion. In every group the proportion of believers is much larger among those who signed than among those who did not. The figures for the historians show the greatest difference; they are 66.7 per cent. for the believers who signed the Q., and 38.9 per cent. for the believers who did not. The disbelieving greater men do not evince a greater readiness to disclose their identity than their less illustrious *confrères*. Of the signed answers from greater historians, only 38.9 per cent. are from disbelievers or doubters.

Men who do not choose to put their signatures to their heterodox opinions when replying to a scientific inquiry, are not likely to announce these opinions to the orthodox people among whom they may live. On the other hand, believers who, unrequested, sign their answers, are just as unlikely to conceal their orthodox opinions from their neighbors. I have already referred to the result of such condition, namely, the far reaching and misleading exaggeration of the number of believers.

I have explained elsewhere that it was necessary to send out the Q. twice. It occurred to me that a comparison of the prompt with the tardy answers might reveal interesting information on the attitude of the respondents. One would suppose that persons with clear and sharply defined views, whether positive or negative, would be the more likely to answer at the first request, while those with vague

CHART X

THE SIGNED AND UNSIGNED ANSWERS

		Believers	Disbelievers	Agnostics or Doubters	Non-believers
Scientists — Division II	Lesser	60.7	26.9	12.4	...
		34.9	44.9	20.1	...
	Greater	34.6	46.2	19.2	...
		23.5	55.1	21.4	...
	Both	51.1	34.	14.9	48.9
		30.4	48.9	20.6	69.5
Historians	Lesser	70.	26.7	3.3	...
		58.1	39.7	2.3	...
	Greater	51.1	33.3	5.6	...
		23.1	53.9	23.1	...
	Both	66.7	29.2	4.2	33.3
		38.9	47.4	13.6	61.1
Sociologists	Lesser	35.7	57.1	7.1	...
		19.4	61.3	19.4	...
	Greater	66.7	25.6	7.7	...
		48.8	33.8	17.5	...
	Both	58.5	33.9	7.5	41.5
		40.5	41.4	18.	59.5

Notes: — The figures in this table are percentages of the total number of lesser or of greater men, or of both, as the case may be.

The upper figure in each group of two refers to the signed, the lower to the unsigned answers.

and uncertain opinions would be tempted to procrastinate. The figures do not bear out very definitely this conjecture.

VIII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS FROM THE STATISTICS

Although I have from time to time drawn attention to the most striking results of this statistical inquiry and to their significance, a brief summary and some additional comments seem to be required in this place.

I have claimed that the investigation provides relatively exact information concerning the beliefs in God and in immortality of college students and of several classes of men of high attainments. I have further claimed that this information is valid for all students in the non-technical departments of American colleges and universities of the first rank, when the first rank is taken to mean approximately the upper third of all recognized colleges; and for all the American scientists, historians, sociologists, and psychologists, when these designations are used in as broad a sense as by the official organizations of these different groups.

This second claim need not be accepted merely on the strength of the affirmation of statisticians who declare that the fractions of the whole groups upon which our several investigations bear are sufficient to make the results representative of the entire groups. The 1000 scientists to whom the *questionnaires* were to be sent were separated into two divisions of 500 each. A comparison of these two divisions (table IV) provides adequate justification

for the claim that our figures are valid — with unimportant variations — for all those whose names are included in *American Men of Science*, i. e., for practically every American who may at all properly be called a scientist.

If, in the case of the scientists, we may take the statistics of 1000 as representative of 5500, we may *a fortiori* accept the other statistics as representing the whole of each group, since in each the proportion upon which the investigation bears is larger than in the case of the scientists. While for these the proportion is only 17 per cent., for the historians, it is 54 per cent.; for the sociologists, 34 per cent.; and for the psychologists, 56 per cent.

The representative nature of our statistics invests them with a very great significance, for if these groups of men do not include all the intellectual leaders of the United States, they certainly include the great majority of them. The expression "intellectual leader" should not by any means be construed as a disclaimer of the importance of the moral influence exerted by these men. Most of them are teachers in schools of higher learning. In that capacity they should be, and doubtless are, in a very real sense, moral leaders. There is no class of men who, on the whole, rival them for the influence exerted upon the educated public and upon the young men from whom are to come most of the leaders of the next generation.

What, then, is the main outcome of this research? Chart XI (Partial Summary of Results) shows that in every class of persons investigated, the number of believers in God is less, and in most classes very

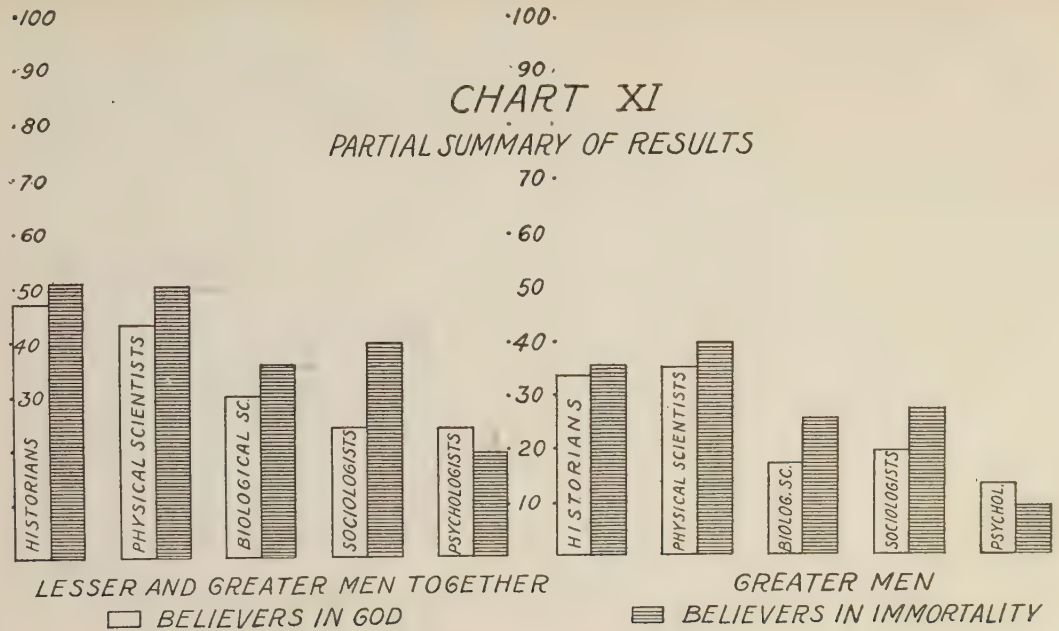


CHART XI
PARTIAL SUMMARY OF RESULTS
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
HISTORIANS
PHYSICAL SCIENTISTS
BIOLOGICAL SC.
SOCIOLOGISTS
PSYCHOLOGISTS
HISTORIANS
PHYSICAL SCIENTISTS
BIOLOG. SC.
SOCIOLOGISTS
PSYCHOL.
LESSER AND GREATER MEN TOGETHER
BELIEVERS IN GOD
GREATER MEN
BELIEVERS IN IMMORTALITY

much less than the number of non-believers, and that the number of believers in immortality is somewhat larger than in a personal God; that among the more distinguished, unbelief is very much more frequent than among the less distinguished; and finally that not only the degree of ability, but also the kind of knowledge possessed, is significantly related to the rejection of these beliefs.

The correlation shown, without exception, in every one of our groups between eminence and disbelief appears to me of momentous significance. In three of these groups (biologists, historians, and psychologists) the number of believers among the men of greater distinction is only half, or less than half the number of believers among the less distinguished men. I do not see any way to avoid the conclusion that disbelief in a personal God and in personal immortality is directly proportional to abilities making for success in the sciences in question. What these abilities are, we shall see in the following chapter.

A study of the charts, with regard to the kind of knowledge which favors disbelief shows that the historians and the physical scientists provide the greater; and the psychologists, the sociologists and the biologists, the smaller number of believers. The explanation I have offered is that psychologists, sociologists, and biologists in very large numbers have come to recognize fixed orderliness in organic and psychic life, and not merely in inorganic existence; while frequently physical scientists have recognized the presence of invariable law in the inorganic world only. The belief in a personal God

as defined for the purpose of our investigation is, therefore, less often possible to students of psychic and of organic life than to physical scientists.

The place occupied by the historians next to the physical scientists would indicate that for the present the reign of law is not so clearly revealed in the events with which history deals as in biology, economics, and psychology. A large number of historians continue to see the hand of God in human affairs. The influence, destructive of Christian beliefs, attributed in this interpretation to more intimate knowledge of organic and psychic life, appears incontrovertibly, as far as psychic life is concerned, in the remarkable fact that whereas in every other group the number of believers in immortality is greater than that in God, among the psychologists the reverse is true; the number of believers in immortality among the greater psychologists sinks to 8.8 per cent. One may affirm it seems that, in general, the greater the ability of the psychologist, the more difficult it becomes for him to believe in the continuation of individual life after bodily death.

The students' statistics show that young people enter college possessed of the beliefs still accepted, more or less perfunctorily, in the average home of the land, and that as their mental powers mature and their horizon widens, a large percentage of them abandon the cardinal Christian beliefs. It seems probable that on leaving college, from 40 to 45 per cent. of the students with whom we are concerned deny or doubt the fundamental dogmas of the Christian religion. The marked decrease in belief that takes place during the later adolescent years, in

those who spend those years in study under the influence of persons of high culture, is a portentous indication of the fate which, according to our statistics, increased knowledge and the possession of certain capacities leading to eminence reserve to the beliefs in a personal God and in personal immortality.

The situation revealed by the present statistical studies demands a revision of public opinion regarding the prevalence and the future of the two cardinal beliefs of official Christianity; and shows the futility of the efforts of those who would meet the present religious crisis by devising a more efficient organization and cooperation of the churches, or more attractive social features, or even a more complete consecration of the church membership to its task. The essential problem facing organized Christianity is constituted by the wide-spread rejection of its two fundamental dogmas — a rejection apparently destined to extend parallel with the diffusion of knowledge and the moral qualities that make for eminence in scholarly pursuits.

CHAPTER X

INDIVIDUALISM AS A CAUSE OF THE REJECTION OF TRADITIONAL BELIEFS

It is commonly supposed that individual knowledge and desire determine belief. This is substantially true only of the classes of belief not backed by some form of social sanction — supposing there be any such. When we say that we are social beings we mean, among other things, that we hold opinions which we have neither established nor critically examined, and that we are guided by aims which correspond more to the needs of society than to our natural individual inclinations. The few who markedly depart from this, the way of social life, are pilloried as iconoclasts and rebels, or lauded as innovators and reformers. But not even these escape the power of social forces. The most they may claim is to be freer than others from the pressure of social convictions, purposes, and practices; and, in so far as they are freer, to determine to a greater degree their beliefs and conduct according to their own nature and critical knowledge.

How compelling the prestige and the power of political and religious bodies, and how independent their influence may be of the personal inclinations of the individual and of rational knowledge, appears perhaps sufficiently on a survey of the geographical

distribution of political and religious convictions. A mere boundary line separates Christians from Buddhists, or the admirers of a king from his bitter detractors — this, even though little or no difference in culture or in temperament or in moral likes and dislikes differentiates the populations. The influence of social forces in the establishment of beliefs should be kept in mind in attempting to account for their disappearance.

No one, I think, will be disposed to contradict me when I affirm that the loss of belief accompanying collegiate progress (charts I, II) can hardly be due to a decrease of a genuine desire for an immortal life in heaven. The students in the lower classes do not yearn for the angelic life more acutely and generally than those in the higher classes. In any case, the statistics would not bear out that explanation. Is it, then, the clearer realization of the absence of sufficient evidence for immortality and of the strength of the objections to it, which break down the traditional faith of many students as they pass on to the higher classes? To a certain extent, yes. But certainly not that alone. Direct arguments for or against immortality have affected but little even the older of these students. The proportions of juniors and of seniors who declare that they have never considered the arguments for immortality are almost the same as that of the freshmen and of the sophomores.

The chief influence on the decrease of belief among older students should be ascribed, in my opinion, to the gain in independence which is a normal result of growth and education. Young people

enter college with few opinions that may be called their own; they are echoes of their social world. In college, they take fuller cognizance of their powers as independent individuals, they learn to detach themselves in thought from the various social groups to which they have belonged or to which they actually belong. They begin to react upon the traditional environment with the energy of their newly found individuality. A serious crisis is often passed through at this period, during which they are sorely tempted to make a *tabula rasa* of the "rubbish" with which they find themselves loaded — and little is there which in their impatience of restraint and in the conceit of their ignorance they would not wipe out with that epithet.

The presence of a powerful impulse to self-affirmation and independence is, it seems to me, revealed incontrovertibly in chart I where men and women are compared. Why are there 82 per cent. of female believers in God and only 56 per cent. of men? It is not because the latter are in possession of information unknown to the former. They belong to the same colleges, attend the same courses, and move in the same social circles. The main cause of the differences is to be found, I hold, in the greater readiness of men to break from tradition. Whether it is a secondary sex difference or merely the product of her education and social position, the greater conservatism of women is not seriously contested. One of its consequences in the sphere of religion is that just attributed to it; during the years of adolescent self-affirmation the desires for intellectual freedom and for a rational organization

of opinions and conduct are in young women more effectively balked than in young men by the tender ties of the home and the authority of the church.

The greater aversion of women to breaking with their social group — an aversion which makes them more impervious to information threatening them with isolation — is a manifestation or perhaps rather an aspect of their greater tenderness and conscious weakness. Other things being equal, the readiness to break with one's social circle and one's past is inversely proportional to love for and dependence upon that circle and that past. One may therefore say, as I did when discussing chart I, that the greater proportion of women believers is an expression of their greater need of affection and of their clearer consciousness of dependence.

When denying to knowledge the principal share in the establishment and maintenance of the beliefs with which we are concerned, we should not forget that the aggressively self-reliant person is more likely to scrutinize the foundation of the faith urged upon him and to look for, or at least to pay attention to facts and arguments in support of other possible faiths. But any gain in knowledge having this origin is to be referred to that independence which appears to me the fundamental cause of the difference of belief we have discovered. The more important thing to bear in mind is, I repeat, not any possible inferiority in point of knowledge, but a difference in attitude and disposition towards the established order of things. As to the relation of knowledge itself to belief, it is a common-place of psychology that conviction is not a function of

knowledge alone, but is dependent in a very substantial way upon inclination. Much of what we know never finds its logical place in our consciousness; whereas other items of knowledge lend to propositions towards which we incline far greater weight than legitimately belongs to them.

If now we turn to the statistics that deal with men of different degree of eminence, we shall again be led to ascribe the more fundamental influence in the production of differences in the number of believers, to intellectual and moral independence and therefore to whatever permits or fosters that independence. Greater eminence implies, doubtless, greater knowledge in the field of eminence and frequently also outside of it. But this does not mean that the loss of belief accompanying eminence arises entirely or even chiefly from greater knowledge. The reward of eminence is not usually given for mere knowledge and sheer intellectual ability; the measure of native intellectual capacity is far from being always in direct relation to the social and scientific standing attained. The qualities we have just assigned in larger degree to men than to women are, in the careers followed by the persons included in our statistics, foremost factors among those leading to eminence. The men of higher rank are, on the whole, distinguished among their colleagues for activity, tenacity, initiative, and self-reliance.[1] Of these qualities, at least the last two tend to resist the forces of tradition, of authority, and of prestige, as well as to increase knowledge.

[1] I purposely leave out of consideration certain moral qualities that are not pertinent to our discussion.

The restraining influence of early moral training and of public opinion has been brought out in the discussion of the signatures and of the comments accompanying the answers to our *questionnaire.* At the same time we have realized that a certain callousness making for effective freedom from kith and kin, for love of the naked truth and sharply defined situations, and a courageous impatience with the bonds that would tie us to the past and retard the movement forward and upward, entered as frequent and powerful factors in the determination of the opinions of our scientific men. Possession in reasonable degree of these qualities, antagonistic to the traditional and the orthodox, is incontestably favorable to success in the careers followed by the classes of men with whom we have been occupied. I conclude, therefore, that the greater loss of belief suffered by the greater men is probably not to be ascribed chiefly to their greater knowledge, but rather to certain temperamental qualities or energies which make it relatively easy for them to rid themselves of much of the social pressure to which others yield.

The action of the qualities singled out is favored by the social environment to which the person who has reached distinction is usually transported. He finds himself removed from lower circles where tradition holds undisputed sway. Around him intellectual freedom is honored far above orthodoxy. So that those who fill the places that fall to the lot of distinguished men of science are relieved of much of the pressure which bears upon their less favored colleagues. If, furthermore, the greater men issue

predominantly from eminent families, they have been from their early years freer than the lesser men from the influence usually exerted upon youth by traditional opinion. In a struggle against the forces of tradition, the greater men would thus be doubly favored.

How shall we account, now, for the differences in belief among the lesser men and and among the greater men themselves? Within these subdivisions as between them, there exist again differences of distinction resting upon the qualities I have singled out; I see, therefore, no reason for giving a separate answer to this second part of the problem. Unbelief both among the lesser and the greater men is probably determined not chiefly by intellectual possessions and abilities, but more essentially by temperamental traits which resist the influence of the social forces that tend to the maintenance of established beliefs.

But why should greater moral and intellectual independence result in the rejection of the beliefs with which we have been concerned, instead of lifting them up to the level of truly personal, critically established convictions? Which of these two possible effects will actually take place in any particular instance of traditional belief, will depend upon one's estimation of the validity of the grounds on which it is held to be true. When none is offered, or when the proffered grounds of belief are insufficient to meet the requirement of an independent mind, then independence will lead either to the rejection of the belief or to agnosticism.

PART III

OF THE PRESENT UTILITY OF THE BELIEFS IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY AND IN A PERSONAL GOD

INTRODUCTORY

The outcome of the foregoing study of the origin of modern immortality, of the metaphysical arguments adduced in its support, and of the statistics of belief in it, is that it rests not upon any scientifically established fact or convincing argument, but upon the usefulness rightly or wrongly ascribed to it. Faith in the hereafter must therefore justify itself by its utility. Is humanity better off with than without that belief? That is the form which the problem assumes; for we are not to consider only the direct loss, but also any effect which its surrender may entail. Like a physical object, if in another sense, a belief fills a place which no other belief can occupy. It has to be removed before another can flourish in its place. The value of new beliefs, made possible by the disappearance of the old, is a constituent part of our problem.

Although I have come to hold that, in so far at least as the most civilized nations are concerned, the modern belief in immortality costs more than it is worth, I do not, of course, claim the ability to prove this opinion to the satisfaction of everybody. An exhaustive treatment of the subject would, furthermore, be impossible here. I shall limit myself to the presentation of certain weighty facts and considerations directly derived from, or suggested by the foregoing studies. These facts and

considerations indicate that the utility of the belief in immortality to civilized nations is much more limited than is commonly supposed; and that, if we bring into the calculation all the consequences of the belief, and not merely its gratifying effects, we may even be brought to conclude that its disappearance from among the most civilized nations would be, on the whole, a gain.[1]

The situation revealed in the preceding pages would be a hopeless one if those were right who hold that utter pessimism and moral decay would be the price paid for the surrender of immortality. "No sooner do we try to get rid of the idea of immortality" writes Emerson, "that Pessimism raises its head. . . . Human griefs seem little worth assuaging; human happiness too paltry (at best) to be worth increasing. The whole moral world is reduced to a point. Good and evil, right and wrong, become infinitesimal, ephemeral matters. The affections die away — die of their own conscious feebleness and uselessness. A moral paralysis creeps over us."[2] Were this true, it were better for this book never to have been written; and the attitude to be commended

[1] Inasmuch as a similar problem exists with regard to the belief in a personal God, and as these beliefs usually disappear together, I shall refer to both of them when the argument applies to both.

The metaphysically inclined is referred to discussions of the value of the belief in God in McTaggart's *Some Dogmas of Religion* ("Theism and Happiness"), and in Hocking's *The Meaning of God in Religious Experience* ("The Need of God").

[2] As quoted in the article, "Immortality," 11th edition of *Ency. Brit.*, I was not able to find this passage in Emerson's writings.

in the presence of this great problem would not be the one of the fearless inquirer, but that of the ostrich. But *is* the modern belief in immortality really necessary in order to make this life worth living; do we lose with it all possibility of living justly, generously, and beautifully?

The burden of the verification of this direful prediction may quite properly be left to those who make it. They might point to shocking instances of moral wretchedness in unbelievers, quite regardless of other unbelievers who are models of cheerful courage and useful citizenship; and they might instance the atrocious deeds of communities which have openly rejected the beliefs with which we are concerned, as France during the Great Revolution. But the demonstration of a causal relation between the rejection of God and immortality and the wickedness of a historical period is not made by the discovery of this coincidence. It would be just as plausible to attribute to unbelief the noble principles and the great social reforms of the French Revolution.

When confronted with the discovery that considerably more than half of all the men included in our investigation, and over two-thirds of the more eminent of these are non-believers in personal immortality and in God, what will these pessimists say? They may repeat the well-worn, although never verified affirmations that unbelievers are saved by the leaven of believers, and that only men of great intelligence can dispense with these beliefs. But that which these and other facts, soon to be mentioned, may be taken to demonstrate is rather that the moral leaven is to-day in civilized lands provided to a very

considerable extent by the unbelievers themselves.

Nothing is more open to suspicion than the feeling of certitude with which it is common to affirm that this or that moral or material possession is necessary to one's well being. The true value of a possession is usually revealed only by its loss. We may find that to be deprived of it is a blessing in disguise, even as Silas Marner discovered after the disappearance of his gold that there were immeasurably greater treasures than those to which he had until then given his heart. Against those who assume the validity of the feeling of the necessity of another life in order to live out this life worthily and in contentment, rise the numberless instances of those who, having cherished that conviction and lost it, found themselves ultimately none the poorer. That opinion is also contradicted by the growing number of eminent moral teachers who condemn the clinging to personal existence after death as a hindrance to the best life on earth.

The alleged necessity of the beliefs in God and immortality need not arrest us longer. The only question deserving consideration is that of the loss that may be entailed or, perchance, the gain that may be made by their surrender.

CHAPTER XI

THE DESIRE FOR IMMORTALITY AND THE USEFULNESS OF THE BELIEF

We have seen that in Christian countries immortality is far from being a universal object of desire. Very little more than half the students in investigation B ascribed to the belief in immortality a serious practical importance (chart II). Among the lesser scientists of the second division, 21.5 per cent. announced the absence of the desire, and 38.7 per cent. a moderate desire, while among the greater men, as many as 35.5 per cent. disclaimed any desire for immortality, and 39.1 per cent. more affirmed a moderate desire only (see chart VI, p. 258). Many of the believers indicated that they were nevertheless quite indifferent to the belief; the utterances of several of these have been quoted. Among the psychologists, 47.2 per cent. affirmed the absence of desire for immortality. These figures will no doubt cause surprise, for it is, I think, generally supposed that even the disbelievers yearn for it. In so far as Schiller's figures are comparable, they confirm mine. He had imagined before the investigation that nearly everybody must feel at least a temporary concern about the future life. His returns "showed comparatively little evidence of great spiritual revolu-

tions and still less of any considerable anguish connected with them." [1] He was therefore driven to the conclusion that "spiritual crises and prolonged religious excitements are the prerogative of exceptional temperaments; ordinary persons seem to adjust themselves easily and rapidly to their definite attitude." My own inquiries lead to the same conclusion: they are rare who do not succeed in adjusting themselves satisfactorily to the loss of religious beliefs once held to be absolutely indispensable.

Forty-three per cent. of the men and 22 per cent. of the women students (investigation A) declare themselves indifferent to the existence of God. These are nearly all non-believers.

The great discrepancy between the actual facts and the general opinion concerning the desire for and the prevalence of the beliefs in God and immortality, is readily explained. The unbelievers usually keep their opinions to themselves, because of the obloquy cast upon disbelievers, and because the ground

[1] "The Answers to the American Branch *Questionnaire* regarding Human Sentiment as to a Future Life"; *Pro. Soc. Psy. Research;* Part 49; Vol. XVIII; pages, 428, 429.

Forty per cent. only, out of a total of 3321 answers, gave an affirmative answer to the query, "Do you now feel the question of a future life to be of urgent importance to your mental comfort?" In this 40 per cent. were included those "who had never entertained a doubt, or had trained themselves to regard a future life as certain, and then dismissed the matter from their minds." Schiller remarks that "these had to be counted as yesses, especially when it was expressly stated that though a future life might not be often thought of, yet to lose this assurance would amount to a spiritual catastrophe." The "noes," we are told, are often of a very decided character; "not at all," "not in the least," "never think about it," being common phrases.

for their unbelief is rarely clearly formulated in their own minds. The believers, convinced as they are that the welfare of the community depends upon these beliefs, drown by the loudness and frequency of their affirmations the muffled objections offered by the most assertive of the unbelievers. As long as a few hold God and immortality to be vital beliefs, while most think that nothing is to be gained by their loss, the present mistaken opinion concerning their prevalence and potency will persist.

Should any one be tempted to seek the cause of indifference to immortality in an uneasy conscience or in moral obtuseness, a closer examination of my statistical data should undeceive him. The increase in indifference and disbelief accompanying scientific eminence and collegiate progress is decidedly not compatible with that explanation.

Dislike for Immortality: — Not only is it completely erroneous to suppose that even though all our contemporaries do not believe, they all desire immortality; but it is even true that a relatively considerable number of them abhor the idea of endless continuation. Many instances of marked dislike for immortality have been recorded. I select the following: —

A woman, thirty years of age, declares that she "has always felt death to be better than all, and the sight of death does not weaken the pleasure of anticipating it as the best thing life has to offer: this sense that it is a triumph, is not born of theology or distaste for life; for health, surroundings, joy of life have always been of the best; there is no thought of

anything after life, but death itself is 'a consummation devoutly to be wished.'" [2]

A man, twenty years old, member of the Presbyterian Church, writes: —

"I have thought about immortality considerably, but it does not cause me any uneasiness at all. I shall be content to die, absolutely dead, and pass off into nothing,— beautiful, blessed, peaceful nothing, — when I do die. Of course I love life, and shall live with a vim as long as I can, but I do not desire to live forever. I want to be unconscious, and not even know that it is 'I' who am resting." [3]

From my own collection I take this: —

"For some cause which I do not know how to explain, I feel a great dread of the possibility of having to live forever, or even again. If I could be certain that at death I would find oblivion, it would add greatly to my present happiness." [4]

If the hope of immortality has often been the poet's inspiration, he has also been moved by the hope of annihilation: —

"From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;

[2] President G. Stanley Hall: "A Study of Fears"; *Amer. Jr. of Psy.;* VIII; 1897. Pages 221–224.

[3] J. Morse and J. Allen, Jr.: "The Religion of One Hundred and Twenty-six College Students"; *Jr. of Relig. Psychol.;* 1913; VII; pages 175–194.

[4] Number 116 of my unpublished documents.

That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

"Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light;
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight;
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night." [5]

John Addington Symonds echoed in prose the same sentiments: —

"Until that immortality of the individual is irrefragably demonstrated, the sweet, the immeasurably precious hope of ending with this life, the ache and languor of existence, remains open to burdened human personalities." [6]

It will be hard for those who in discouragement and sorrow are accustomed to find comfort in the contemplation of an eternity of bliss, to see in these instances anything more than an expression of illness or of moral perversion. I do not think, however, that either judgment would fit the majority of the wooers of annihilation. Yet there are among them a few clearly abnormal cases; this one, for instance: —

"The main idea by which I am tormented is that of eternity; . . . I feel time lasting indefinitely, space lengthening without end, something like a never stopping crescendo. It seems to me that my being

[5] Swinburne, "The Garden of Proserpina."
[6] From a letter to Henry Sidgwick.

gradually swells, substitutes itself to everything, grows by absorbing worlds and centuries, then bursts, and everything ceases, and I am left with an atrocious pain in the head and in the stomach. . . . It is eternity which is frightful. Something without end, how horrible! Everlasting happiness, and after? Still happiness, and after? That is as horrible as everlasting suffering." [7]

One is not even at liberty to suppose that an unusual degree of disillusionment is responsible for aversion to a future life in the physiologically healthy and morally normal, for the fading away of the promises of early life should rather fix one's eyes more firmly upon the Perfect Life; modern immortality has sprung precisely from dissatisfaction with earthly existence. There must be something else that accounts for the difference between those who crave and those who abhor immortality.[8]

[7] Pierre Janet: *Les Obsessions et la Psychasthénie;* Vol. I, pages 136, 137.

[8] If abhorrence of eternal existence of any conceivable sort, is after all exceptional in Christian countries, it is the common expectation in orthodox Buddhism. Nirvana, to which the followers of Buddha aspire, is a state from which all wickedness and corruption have departed and also all desires; individual personality has disappeared by absorption in the All:

"And being, O priests, myself subject to birth, I perceived the wretchedness of what is subject to birth, and craving the incomparable security of a Nirvana free from birth, I attained the incomparable security of a Nirvana free from birth; myself subject to old age, . . . disease, . . . death, . . . sorrow, . . . corruption, I perceived the wretchedness of what is subject to corruption, and, craving the incomparable security of a Nirvana free from corruption, I attained the incomparable security of a Nirvana free from corruption. And the knowledge and the insight sprang up within me,

But why seek far afield for an explanation of the dislike of immortality? A weariness of existence, temperamental, or the fruit of age [9] or of other circumstances (but not necessarily due to disillusionment); a disposition to enjoy the mood that informs Bryant's noble poem, Thanatopsis; and especially, perhaps, an inability to picture in intelligible and acceptable form a future life, suffice to make of a death that ends all, a satisfactory, even a desirable goal.

If no one can be indifferent to happiness, one may not be able to foresee conditions of real *eternal* happiness. The despisers of immortality should not be thought to occupy the paradoxical position of rejecting blessedness; they are rather not able to

'My deliverance is unshakable; this is my last existence; no more shall I be born again.' And it occurred to me, O priests, as follows:

"'This doctrine to which I have attained is profound, recondite, and difficult of comprehension, good, excellent, and not to be reached by mere reasoning, subtile, and intelligible only to the wise. Mankind, on the other hand, is captivated, entranced, held spell-bound by its lusts; and forasmuch as mankind is captivated, entranced, held spell-bound by its lusts, it is hard for them . . . to understand how all the constituents of being may be made to subside, all the substrata of being be relinquished, and desire be made to vanish, and absence of passion, cessation, and Nirvana be attained.'" Henry Clarke Warren: *Buddhism in Translations;* Vol. III; 1900. Pages 338, 339.

[9] Colin Scott (*Loc. cit.*, page 91) reports the opinion, or rather the "feeling," of sixteen old persons (average age, seventy-six) concerning their desire for life. Ninety-four per cent. would not like to live over; seventy per cent. long to die. Is this because of fatigue with this life, or because of the hope of future blessedness? Indifference to the other life probably keeps pace with indifference to this. Both are expression of weakened desire.

persuade themselves that any eternal life of which they can conceive, would be to them blessedness. This is an important and a neglected aspect of the problem of immortality. Outside of the simple folk who accept whole-heartedly a paradise similar to the Garden of Eden, with God walking about in the cool of the evening, believers in personal immortality find themselves hard put to it to conceive under definite forms a never ending existence neither puerile nor surfeiting. As a matter of fact, I do not know of any one who has succeeded in investing the future life with features acceptable to the cultured Christian. The imagery of the New Testament is in this regard, as much as Dante's, purely symbolic or poetic. The fact is — and it is important that we should realize it — that we can think of the other life as eternal blissfulness only on condition of not insisting upon knowing anything specific about it. As soon as, no longer satisfied with a general assurance of unruffled peace and unalloyed enjoyment, we demand specifications, we find ourselves in the presence of ideas and pictures, either absurd or repulsive, or void of real attractiveness. The best gifted religious seers succeed in this descriptive task no better than the cleverest mediums. The utter failure of these to provide anything in the least acceptable in the way of a picture of the other world, when even moderate success would make their fortune, is a striking demonstration of the necessity for those who desire immortality of being content with a bare assurance of happiness and to be wary of curiosity; for never since the days of Pandora was there a curiosity more surely threatening disaster.

It is after all not very difficult to enter into the feelings of the weary earthly traveler who prefers the thought of extinction at death to the risk of an endless individual existence which, the more carefully he seeks to picture or conceive, the less attractive it becomes. In his acute study of the desire for immortality, Schiller noted that fact, and also the freedom with which many make use of the belief when and how it pleases them and forget it when its remembrance would be inconvenient: —

"The future life is a vision that floats before the eye of faith, not a brutal fact to be thrust upon a reluctant attention. The world can stomach a future life so discreetly formulated." Thinking at times about heaven and hell, liking to hear an occasional sermon about them, "in no wise implies that they are taken as facts and must be acted on as such. On the contrary, it is just because the religious doctrines of Immortality are *not* taken as fact that they are accepted. . . . Hence the religious doctrines with respect to the future life form a sort of paper currency, inconvertible with facts, which suits people and circulates the better because of its very badness. Their function is to conjure up pleasing and consoling visions whenever we are in a mood for them, to provide a brighter background for life than sheer extinction; but they are not allowed to grow insistent enough seriously to affect action." [10]

The very significant disposition to play fast and loose with immortality appears in the answers to this question of the inquiry of the Society for Psychical

[10] *Humanism:* London; 1903. Pages 239, 240.

Research, "Would you like to know for certain about the future life, or would you prefer to leave it a matter of faith?" Only 21 per cent. out of a total of 3218 may be credited with a real desire for a scientific knowledge of the possibility of a future life, while 23 per cent. voted for faith, 12.9 per cent. for ignorance, and 3.3 per cent. declared indifference. Definite knowledge might not meet all our desires; it certainly would not leave us the freedom we enjoy when immortality is a matter of faith, or one of which we are ignorant.[11]

In any case, it is a fact, as President Stanley Hall remarks, that "even those surest of Heaven stay here to the last possible moment, even though their lives in this world be miserable. Does not this show that belief in post-mortem life is a convention, a dream-wish? If we were told of a new continent of fabulous wealth and charm, and believed it all, we should go to it by individuals, families, tribes, and leave fatherlands untenanted, although we had to brave dark and tempestuous seas to get there. We should not ritually pray against a sudden transit, or be called fanatics if we voluntarily crossed the tide because

[11] Schiller's figures could be supported by a long array of utterances to this effect: "At present, belief in immortality plays a very small part in my experience or motives; I leave it indefinite, though I rather feel it is true."

"I have given up early the idea of future life, but I think somehow spirit may be eternal, but I don't know whether the finite spirit will preserve its identity in the future state, or whether in some way it may be resolved into the infinite spirit; I like to think of both these possibilities, and a third, viz., that the influence of one's life will continue to affect future generations of mankind."—Scott: *loc cit.*

the old world had become intolerably hard for us." [12]

Indifference to Immortality.— If the number of persons disinclined to an eternal future existence is considerable, those who are simply indifferent or nearly so are legion. Every one may find about him many belonging to this category. Most of these will add, " But my friends and neighbors could not get along without it." And these friends and neighbors, probably indifferent also, take a similar care not to unsettle others in the belief they are supposed to cherish. Thus, overgrown beliefs enjoy an existence largely fictitious.

I have already given the percentage of those who in my statistical investigation declare themselves indifferent to another life. From other sources I glean the following instances: —

A man who at twenty-two was at the point of death from disease, reports his sadness at the prospect of leaving this world. Fear disturbed him very little. He said, " I want to live long enough to do something in the world, but if Providence vetoes that wish — ' Let 'er go, Gallagher.' " The flippancy of his attitude surprised and shocked him. Despite this experience of nearness to death, he " never could get up interest enough in the future world to seek for more knowledge." [13]

A Methodist, twenty years old, writes: —

[12] G. Stanley Hall: " Thanatopsis and Immortality "; *Amer. Jr. of Psy.;* 1915; Vol. XXVI; pages 579, 580, abbreviated.

[13] Scott. *Loc. cit.;* page 107.

"The problem of immortality has caused me no uneasiness. I feel that if I get through this life I will be doing pretty well. And so I let God take care of the future. If I deserve eternal life, He being a just God, as I believe He is, will take care of the future, and give eternal life." [14]

These instances taken from the experience of persons of ordinary intelligence can easily be matched by others from men of distinction, as was already shown in the discussion of the statistics. John Stuart Mill did not feel a craving for an endless existence; and it seemed to him "not only possible but probable that in a higher, and, above all, a happier condition of human life, not annihilation but immortality" might be "the burdensome idea." [15] In the preface to *Body and Mind*, the English psychologist, Wm. McDougall, states his attitude thus:—

"I can lay claim to no religious convictions; I am not aware of any strong desire for any continuance of my personality after death; and I could accept with equanimity a thorough-going Materialism, if that seemed to me the inevitable outcome of a dispassionate and critical reflection. Nevertheless, I am in sympathy with the religious attitude towards life; and I should welcome the establishment of sure empirical foundations for the belief that human personality is not wholly destroyed by death. For, as was said above, I judge that this belief can only be kept alive if a proof of it, or at least a presumption

[14] Morse and Allen: *Loc. cit.*
[15] *The Utility of Religion.*

in favor of it, can be furnished by the methods of empirical science." [16]

A lecturer on immortality admits similarly that he does not happen to have " the intense yearning that many profess for an endless existence." He writes: —

" I feel about a future life as one might feel in regard to setting forth upon an untried voyage; for example, to some distant star. So far as I have confidence that I am a citizen of a rational universe, I can conceive that the unknown voyage will be worth all the trouble it may cost. The venture stirs my interest. But otherwise, I have little sense of clinging to life, merely in order to live." [17]

And Renan, utterly skeptic about a future life, provides us with this bit of beautiful prose, delightful or shocking according to one's temper and philosophy: —

" My experience of life has . . . been very pleasant, and I do not think that there are any human beings happier than I am. I have a keen liking for the universe. . . . All that I have now to ask of the good genius who has so often guided, advised, and consoled me is a calm and sudden death, at my appointed hour, be it near or distant. . . . Suffering degrades, humiliates, and leads to blasphemy." [18]

Immortality as a Morally Inferior Belief.—Immortality is not only abhorrent to many and unat-

[16] *Body and Mind:* New York; Macmillan; 1911. Page 13.

[17] C. F. Dole: *The Hope of Immortality;* Ingersoll Lecture for 1906; New York; Crowell & Company. Page 61.

[18] From the conclusion to *Recollections of my Youth.*

tractive to a much larger number, but the desire for it is condemned as morally inferior and, in professed followers of Christ, as reprehensible. This is a relatively new phase of the controversy; it marks, it seems, the passage from the defensive to the offensive on the part of the disbelieving moralists: the abandonment of the belief has become for these a condition of the attainment of the highest moral end. The insistency of great moral and religious teachers, like Schleiermacher and Tolstoi, upon the evil selfishness of the desire for immortality, is noteworthy.

"The immortality that most men imagine and their longing for it, seems to me irreligious, nay quite opposite to the spirit of piety. Dislike of the very aim of Religion is the ground of their wish to be immortal. Recall how Religion earnestly strives to expand the sharp cut outlines of personality. Gradually we are to be lost in the Infinite that we, becoming conscious of the Universe, may as much as possible be one with it. But men struggle against this aim. They are anxious about their personality.

. . . The one opportunity that death gives them of transcending it, they are very far from wishing to embrace. On the contrary, they are concerned as to how they are to carry it with them beyond this life. . . . Would they but attempt to surrender their lives from love of God! Would they but strive to annihilate their personality to live in the One and in the All!" [19]

Tolstoi was equally convinced with Schleiermacher of the desirability, nay, the duty for a Christian to

[19] *Speeches on Religion;* Second speech; Tr. by John Orman: London: 1893. Pages 99–101.

renounce the wish for immortality. He did not admit that Christ had taught that belief: —

"As opposed to the personal life, Jesus taught us, not a life beyond the grave, but that universal life which comprises within itself the life of humanity, past, present, and to come. . . . The entire doctrine of Jesus inculcates renunciation of the personal, imaginary life, and a merging of this personal life in the universal life of humanity, in the life of the son of man. Now the doctrine of the individual immortality of the soul does not impel us to renounce the personal life; on the contrary, it affirms the continuance of individuals forever." [20]

From the Ethical Culture Societies come similar utterances: —

"We no longer need to believe that we shall rise again, either with or without our bodies. We never should have needed it, had our insight into the meaning and bearings of the good life been clear and penetrating. The modern recognition that moral faith does not need the belief in a life after death is one of the greatest achievements which the human spirit has ever made. It is a discovery in the very spirit of the New Testament, that enthusiasm for holiness is not essentially dependent upon belief in the survival either of the mind or body of any one after death." [21]

Avowed materialists join hands with idealists in enthusiastic affirmations of the sufficiency of earthly life for the spiritual development and satisfaction of man: —

"It will be seen that my philosophy is thoroughly

[20] *My Religion;* chapter VIII.

[21] Stanton Coit: *National Idealism and the Book of Common Prayer;* pages 147, 148.

materialistic. I believe that man has been evolved from lower forms of animal life, . . . that he will continue along this road which he has traveled through countless generations, and that this will ultimately lead the race over the mountain tops and into the promised land of human perfection. . . . I conceive the highest duty of the individual to contribute his mite to the betterment of the whole. Science teaches that what the man thinks, says and does lives after him, and influences for good or ill future generations. To me this is a higher, nobler and greater incentive to righteousness than any hope of personal reward or fear of punishment in a future life. I believe that this is a glorious world, full of great opportunities to the individual, and of unlimited promise of development in the race. Life carries in itself the highest duties, the performance of which should not be regarded as tasks to be shirked if possible or to be done reluctantly, but to be carried on with a spirit of thankfulness that it has fallen to the lot of the individual to be a participant in the great and glorious work of contributing to the uplift of the race. To widen the domain of knowledge, be it ever so little, to abate disease, to lessen pain and suffering, to decrease the burden of poverty, to brighten and ennoble the lives of others . . . these are some of the things that science has done and is doing. To be even an humble and unknown worker in the great army of men who are doing these things is a privilege which should make glad the heart of any man." [22]

[22] Victor C. Vaughan: "The Philosophy of Science"; *Science;* 1912; Vol. XXXVI, page 233.

The poets also, dreamers of beautiful dreams, are learning to find on earth what only heaven was thought to offer: —

"O, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues." [23]

The cry of fear at the disaster supposed to impend from the loss of the belief in immortality will find little echo in those who possess the fuller knowledge of human nature hinted at in the preceding brief notes. The least that must be granted, is, it seems, that the general and final effect of the loss of the belief is an open question, and that a gain resulting from it is one of the possible outcomes.

Present Causes of the Desire for Immortality.— There is no exact correspondence between the causes commonly assigned to the desire for immortality and the actual facts. The demand for a compensation for the injustice of this life, for instance, has been vastly magnified by theorists. An exactly balanced account is not what man requires. Whether we regard this as praiseworthy generosity or as blameworthy indifference to justice, it remains that the be-

[23] George Eliot. See also *The Earth and Man*, and *A Faith on Trial* of Meredith.

lief in immortality is but rarely prompted or supported by a desire that justice shall be done. That that desire did not exercise a controlling influence in the establishment of the belief is evidenced by the form of the orthodox conception itself. Where is the mortal who has *deserved an eternity* of happiness or of torments? No evil doing, even though prolonged throughout a lifetime, can be fairly punished by endless suffering. We are apparently ready to treat with the Universe on a freer basis than exact retribution; it is happiness rather than justice that we want.

The utility of immortality as a "safeguard of morality," is another of the much overstated motives of that belief. It is surprising to find how relatively small is the influence of immortality as a sanction of right conduct. Should the reader ask his friends what they think of this, he would be told, probably by the majority, that the belief in heaven and hell is one of great and general power over conduct. But should he ask the more pointed question, "Of what service is it to you?" he would get information in striking contradiction to the first statement. He would hear that most of them never, or only on rare occasions, refer to the consequences of their actions upon life after death; other considerations guide them. This fact, many are loath to admit because of the prestige of the orthodox opinion.

It is a noteworthy indication of the course of human development that the higher the intellectual and moral level attained, the less does the influence of personal immortality upon conduct make itself felt. We have just seen that many of the most distin-

guished moralists condemn the belief as ethically wrong. But much can be and is made of it among benighted Christian populations.

The desire for immortality finds its main support neither in a sense of justice, nor in the need of an ethical sanction, but in the yearnings of the heart for the maintenance of the bonds of love and friendship, and in the desire to think highly of oneself and the Universe. This last motive rises to great influence only in persons of considerable moral and intellectual distinction. It is the form assumed by the innate tendency to self-preservation and increase when it has undergone the enlarging influence of philosophical thought. The annihilation of the priceless riches which life represents and, as it seems to many, the consequent futility and irrationality of earthly existence are unbearable thoughts. Man might become reconciled to the loss at death of his personality provided human life might still be regarded as of eternal significance. One of the persons already quoted writes: —

"We do wish to be able to respect the world we live in, and we could hardly respect a universe that created a Socrates, a Michel Angelo, or an Epictetus only to destroy him, as the early gods are reputed to have devoured their own offspring.

"This brings me frankly to confess to a certain bias. I own that the more I know about life, the more I desire to discover rationality in it. I had rather be a citizen for even a brief period in a significant and intelligent world than to live forever in a meaningless world. I had rather be able to look out for one day on the possibilities of an infinite uni-

verse than to possess millenniums circumscribed within bounds of time and place. I cannot help this kind of bias. It seems to be involved in the nature of mind. Other men gladly make the same confession. Here is one of the facts of human nature that thought has to reckon with." [24]

Darwin struggled with a similar difficulty: —

" Believing as I do that man in the distant future will be a far more perfect creature than he now is [because of the operation of the laws of natural and sex selection], it is an intolerable thought that he and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation after such long-continued slow progress." [25]

But personal immortality is probably not the only possible way by which the rationality of the universe can be vindicated. Dole himself would be content to relinquish personal immortality provided the " immortality of influence " were the best use to which he could be put. Darwin likewise could, I think, have found contentment in an assurance of the continuation, not of each individual, but of the race in which the progress of all is embodied. The passage quoted was written under the impression produced upon him by the affirmation of physicists that in a measurable time the sun would grow too cold to maintain life; and he was thinking less of the living individuals than of the " far more perfect creatures " which, according to his theory, nature could not fail to produce.

[24] C. F. Dole: *The Hope of Immortality;* Ingersoll Lecture, 1906. Pages 4–9.

[25] From his *Autobiography,* as quoted by his son in *Charles Darwin:* London; 1902. Page 61.

To Felix Adler, racial continuation would be insufficient; yet he also could be satisfied without the persistence of the conscious self involved in the Christian belief. He finds in his consciousness the assurance that "our moral ideal is destined to be realized, though we may not know *how* it will be realized."

"Vast possibilities suggest themselves to us of an order of existence wholly different from all that we have ever known; what may be the nature of that other life it is impossible to know and it is useless to speculate. Such terms as consciousness, individuality, even personality, are but finite screens which give no adequate clew to the infinite for which they stand. Only this I feel warranted in holding fast to — that the root of my selfhood, the best that is in me, my true and only being, cannot perish. In regard to that the notion of death seems to me to be irrelevant." [26]

Our ignorance with respect to ultimate problems is so profound that we may not regard the demand for the rationality of the Universe as implying unequivocably a demand for personal immortality. Of the two desires to which we have ascribed the preponderant rôle in the maintenance of the present belief, only that for the continuance of love and friendship can be gratified in no other way than by a survival involving continuation of the sense of identity. The violence of this desire is well known, yet I may quote this heart-rending cry of a young wife recently bereft of her husband. She was an intimate friend of

[26] *Life and Destiny:* New York; McClure, Phillips and Company; 1903. Pages 35–39, abbreviated.

Schleiermacher, and to him she turned in the hour of her distress: —

"O Schleier, in the midst of my sorrow there are yet blessed moments when I vividly feel what a love ours was, and that surely this love is eternal, and it is impossible that God can destroy it; for God himself is love. I bear this life while nature will; for I have still work to do for the children, his and mine: but O God! with what longings, what foreshadowings of unutterable blessedness, do I gaze across into that world where he lives! What joy for me to die!

Schleier, shall I not find him again? O my God! I implore you, Schleier, by all that is dear to God and sacred, give me, if you can, the certain assurance of finding and knowing him again. Tell me your inmost faith on this, dear Schleier; Oh! if it fails, I am undone. It is for this that I live, for this that I submissively and quietly endure: this is the one only outlook that sheds a light on my dark life,— to find him again, to live for him again. O God! he cannot be destroyed!" [27]

To this appeal the great interpreter of religion to whom, more than to any one else, contemporary theology has looked for guidance, could not give the longed for answer.

There is, I believe, no other so frequent cause of an effective belief in immortality as the loss by death of a loved person. But the desire for the continuation of those we love is, in itself, in no way a guarantee of its realization. It is only when the exist-

[27] From Schleiermacher's *Leben*, as quoted by James Martineau in *A Study of Religion;* Vol. II, page 337.

ence of a purposive, benevolent Creator is assumed that it can be argued with some degree of assurance that the presence of this desire implies its gratification. Again here, however, that which to our limited vision seems necessary may not be so.

The fundamental illogicalness of man is well shown in the ease with which even men of culture pass directly from the desire to the belief. I have already had occasion, when dealing with the origin of the modern conception, to mention the striking effect upon Cicero of the death of his beloved and only daughter. Here are a few instances, taken from among our contemporaries, of the direct influence of feeling upon belief: —

"My beliefs in future life and in recognition after death have been strengthened by the death of my little boy; I know that this is no intellectual evidence, but it is evidence that any heart will weigh before rejecting; . . . I see no reason why my love for my dead boy, and my desire to be reunited to him may not postulate the very existence of the objects towards which they are directed."

"During the funeral of my father, I felt for the first time a certainty of meeting him again; about seventeen the question of immortality was a favorite subject of reflection and reading; I became more and more satisfied that there was a life beyond, although nobody could demonstrate it; this was a spiritual but visualized existence; I saw myself with dear friends and with the great and good of all ages; wondered if Socrates and Homer would care enough for me to allow me to be near them. The death of a near

friend a year ago has profoundly affected my life; it seems as if a part of myself is gone and that I shall never recover my wholeness until I am with him again." [28]

"When sorrow and death have come into my life, I have felt the necessity of believing in another world. The desire to make human love eternal is with me the most characteristically religious feeling. . . . Formerly, before I suffered, I never experienced it. My indifference to the religious point of view was absolute." [29]

The great biologist, Henri Pasteur, often offered as a conspicuous instance of the possible marriage of science and faith in the Christian dogmas, tells in a letter to Sainte-Beuve and again in a speech before the *Académie de Medecine* why he believes in immortality: —

"My philosophy is of the heart and not of the mind, and I give myself up, for instance, to those feelings about eternity which come naturally at the bedside of a cherished child drawing its last breath."

"There are two men in each one of us: the scientist, he who starts with a clear field and desires to rise to the knowledge of Nature through observation, experimentation, and reasoning; and the man of sentiment, the man of belief, the man who mourns his dead children and who cannot, alas, prove that he will see them again, but who believes that he will, and lives

[28] These last two quotations are taken from Scott: *Loc. cit.;* pages 106, 107. They come from men aged respectively 31, and 26 years.

[29] From the Appendix to Lucian Arreat's *Le Sentiment Religieux en France:* Paris; Alcan; 1903.

in that hope; . . . the man who feels that the force that is within him cannot die." [30]

I may remark incidentally upon the off-hand manner in which Pasteur divides life into two spheres, that of science and that of feeling, and apparently finds no use for logic and reason in the latter. This is a shocking example of a dangerous practice which, when carried to its logical consequence, would permit one to believe whatever he pleases. When I attempt to understand this attitude in a distinguished man of science, I can only conjecture that he treated religion as something primarily intended to comfort *anyway, anyhow.* So that, just as a mother might feel free to say anything to her sick child, provided she cheers him, so one may affirm "religiouswise" anything it pleases us to believe. The scientists in whose professions of antiquated faith simple believers are taught to find comfort are mostly those whose religious thinking is of this shallow sort.

In order to appreciate correctly the influence of love and affection upon the belief in immortality, one should consider not only the common intensity of these feelings but also the distressing ease with which we forget and grow indifferent. Love and affection for the dead are, while they last, powerful incentives to belief in an endless existence; but the destiny of the tender feeling, as of all others, is to be weakened by time. When middle age is past and old age approaches, feelings have frequently lost too much of their energy to lift man above mundane existence. Does not human frailty permit us to go further, and

[30] I take these passages from E. D. Adams: *This Life and the Next;* page 239.

to admit, for instance, that Schleiermacher's friend may have remarried? In that occurrence her former yearnings for another life might have been replaced by dread of the time when she would be face to face with two husbands. This is one of the many situations which account for the practice upon which I have commented of refusing to treat heaven realistically.

CHAPTER XII

THE SOCIAL ORIGIN OF MORAL IDEAS AND INSPIRATION AND THE UTILITY OF TRANSCENDENTAL BELIEFS

The official representatives of religious systems are filled with apprehension at the thought of the possible loss of the beliefs in a personal God and immortality. Yet, the only real danger is created, I think, by their misunderstanding of the origin of moral ideals and energy. It is because of this misunderstanding that they regard the loss of these beliefs as a calamity. Were their opinion to be generally accepted, a fatal feeling of degradation and of helplessness would benumb those who find themselves compelled to relinquish these beliefs. As a matter of fact, the threat of impending disaster, although far from universally felt, overshadows the sky of the faithful who are not altogether blind to the religious transformation now in progress, and it deprives many doubters of the hopeful energy with which they would otherwise meet the uncertainty of their situation.[1]

It is, therefore, of the greatest practical importance that those who have become convinced of the absence of sufficient ground for these two beliefs and

[1] See, for instance, case IV, 4 of investigation A, page 193.

of their apparently unavoidable disappearance if humanity continues in its present course, realize that morality is essentially independent of them. They must know with the clearness that brings persuasion that moral ideals and moral energy have their source in social life; that, as participants in the life of a family and of wider social groups, men draw directly at the original fount of moral discrimination and inspiration.

I have attempted, after many others, to place that truth beyond debate, first by pointing out, in an earlier volume how the god-ideas came into existence, then by showing in Part I of the present book how the conceptions of immortality arose and how man contrived to use these ideas in order to further earth-born social and individual ideals.[2] The statistics of Part II seem to support the proposition which a study of the origin of morality establishes regarding the relation of religious belief to morality. For there exists not the slightest reliable information permitting the supposition that in those statistics the morally better men are those constituting the believing minority. The correlation, in every one of the groups investigated, of disbelief with eminence, can on the contrary be made to lend support to the contention of many of our contemporaries, admired for their talents and venerated for their devotion to hu-

[2] See on the origin of moral ideas, L. T. Hobhouse: *Morals in Evolution;* A. Sutherland: *The Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct;* and E. A. Westermarck: *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas.* Wm. McDougall's *Social Sociology,* and Alexander Shand's *The Foundations of Character* are excellent contributions to the understanding of the nature and development of character.

manity, that at present these beliefs are hindrances to spiritual progress.

However that may be, these facts cannot be more convincing of the fundamental independence of morality from the cardinal beliefs of the existing religions, than the direct observation of the moral life, as it unfolds itself about us in the family and the wider social groups. Our alleged essential dependence upon transcendental beliefs is belied by the most common experiences of daily life. Who does not feel the absurdity of the opinion that the lavish care for a sick child by a mother is given because of a belief in God and immortality? Are love of father and mother on the part of children, affection and serviceableness between brothers and sisters, straightforwardness and truthfulness between business men essentially dependent upon these beliefs? What sort of person would be the father who would announce divine punishment or reward in order to obtain the love and respect of his children? And if there are business men preserved from unrighteousness by the fear of future punishment, they are far more numerous who are deterred by the threat of human law. Most of them would take their chances with heaven a hundred times before they would once with society, or perchance with the imperative voice of humanity heard in the conscience.

On what do our political leaders rely when they wish to rouse the public conscience and bring about vital improvements? On the thought of God and immortality? How absurd the idea! The Hebrew prophets threatened social and political calamities at the hand of Yahweh, because they actually believed

in Yahweh's government of Israel. Our political prophets also threaten national calamities, but not at the hand of the Christian God, for we no longer really believe in his intervention.[3] Yet, our conviction of the necessity and of the possibility of moral amendment is no less firm, and the joy of success no less keen.

The heroism of religious martyrs is often flaunted as marvelous instances of the unique sustaining strength derived from the belief in a personal God and the anticipation of heaven. And yet, for every martyr of this sort, there has been one or more heroes who has risked his life for a noble cause, without the comfort which transcendental beliefs may bring. The very present offers almost countless instances of martyrs to the cause of humanity who were strangers to the idea of God and immortality. How many men and women have in the past decade gladly offered and not infrequently lost their lives in the cause of freedom, or justice, or science? In the monstrous war we are now witnessing, is there a less heroic defense of home and nation, and less

[3] Of the sense of a real, immediate dependence upon a personal divinity, there remain in Christian states but a few pitiable remnants. In the United States the most conspicuous one is the yearly proclamation of a Day of Thanksgiving by which the members of the nation are called upon to return thanks to God for the good that has fallen to their lot and that of the country during the year. From an expression of genuine belief, this custom has become an objectionable tradition which, the sooner it is abandoned, the better for those who keep it up and for those to whom it is addressed. It were better, instead, that we should be taught to realize our dependence upon each other and the gratitude we owe to the millions who strive, often in material and moral distress, in order to build our material and spiritual prosperity.

conscious self-renunciation for the sake of others among the non-believers than among the professed Christians? Have modern Christian nations shown a more intense or a purer patriotism than ancient Greek or Rome where men did not pretend to derive inspiration for their deeds of devotion in the thought of their gods? Cicero, mediocre though he was in point of private virtue, expected of every man, at the call of country, the sacrifice of life and reputation.

Nothing could be more evident than that the approval of God and the assurance of eternal happiness are not original motives for the generosity with which man offers up his life. The fruitful deeds of heroism are at bottom inspired not by the thought of God and of a future life, but by innate tendencies or promptings that have reference to humanity. Self-sacrifice, generosity, is rooted in nothing less superficial and accidental than social instincts older than the human race, for they are already present in a rudimentary form in the higher animals.[4]

When it is granted, as it must be, that the knowledge and the practice of the virtues do not have their original source in transcendental beliefs, it may still be claimed that as mere auxiliaries to the moral life the beliefs in God and immortality cannot be dispensed with without grave prejudice to humanity; that we cannot with impunity go counter to these manifestations of the empirical wisdom of mankind.

[4] Among recent instances of the manifestation of these social instincts, stand out the devotion of the physicians and nurses of the Red Cross in Servia, many of whom lost their lives in heroic efforts to save that unhappy country from decimating diseases.

What then, in the most civilized Christian nations, is the value of these beliefs? In answer to this query I can do no more than add certain brief considerations to the cumulative significance of the facts brought forward in the preceding pages. It is now generally admitted that one cannot moralize by external compulsion. Preventing a man from committing murder by mere fear of the gallows or a child from lying by mere threat of punishment, serves a purpose, but that purpose is not their moral improvement. No more can anyone be made generous by being compelled or enticed to open his purse. In order to do more than prevent murder and theft, more than secure money for the poor, the murderer and the child must be made to realize the wickedness of their desires, and in the heart of the giver must be awakened true charity.

In so far as God and immortality stand for external reward and punishment, they have, it will be agreed, no truly moralizing value; they may merely prevent some evil and compel some good. But even in this respect, the social sanctions are, in the great majority of instances, much more effective than the divine. By social sanctions we should not, of course, think merely of the law, but also of the enormous restraining and encouraging influences exerted by friends, family, and public opinion. Every one realizes what a catastrophe would follow the removal of these social restraints even though God and immortality continued to exert the attenuated influence remaining to them.

But, it is urged, the ideas of God and immortality do not act merely as external checks and encourage-

ments. When God is an object of reverence and love, the desire to make his will one's own gives to the belief a truly moralizing power. True as this remark is, its real import appears only when we know how we become acquainted with, and learn to value the perfections that are in God. There is no simpler nor better statement of the origin of the love of God than the well known Biblical passage, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen." In the education of the young, as well as in the reformation of the warped adult, the truth of this is ever seen anew. It is love of man that convinces child and hardened sinner alike of the love of God.

We are now, fortunately, almost done with the absurd tradition that formal religion is the essential means of moral education. We have discovered and are confirming daily that success in moral education depends essentially upon the measure in which one is able to replace artificial or distant reward and punishment by the natural consequences, or by the clear realization of the natural consequences of action; and upon the measure in which freedom can be granted in surroundings offering the richest possible opportunity for the discovery and appreciation of the significance of conduct. Belief in transcendental objects, bearers of perfection, is of no greater value in artistic education than in ethical culture; it is in the contemplation of beautiful objects present to the senses that we learn to know and love the beautiful, and in the presence of noble characters and

fine conduct that we learn to know and love the good.[5]

Those who exaggerate the usefulness of the beliefs in immortality and in God conceived as the perfect embodiment of all the values discovered on earth, fail to realize the inherent disadvantages of these beliefs. The evils they breed may be called by the general name of "otherworldliness." It would be difficult to evaluate the harm done to humanity in the past by the conviction that the real destination of man is the world to come. A sincere belief in the Christian God, to whom the believer is to be united in heaven, is an unavoidable cause of detachment from this life. The instances offered in contradiction, great mystics like St. Francis of Assisi or St. Theresa, who have displayed an intense and efficient activity, do not at all prove what one would like to demonstrate by them. They lacked it is true neither energy nor devotion, but the direction their zeal took, the aim they set before themselves, was clearly open to the objection I raise against the influence of transcendental beliefs: they spent themselves heroically not in order to prepare, like far-sighted statesmen, the coming of peace and universal happiness on earth, but to fit men and women for heaven — the difference is notable. I know religious life too favorably to insinuate that those who preach the Kingdom of Heaven are enemies of mankind, but I think that on the whole they would serve it better

[5] These principles are the corner stones of the educational system of the New Schools (Landerziehungsheim, Ecoles Nouvelles), and the hope of the new management of reform institutions.

were they able to forget not only hell but also heaven. There is always some discrepancy between that which is best for the God of the Christian worship and life in heaven, and that which is best for the individual and society on earth: one cannot serve perfectly man and the traditional God.

If in the Christian church the evil of otherworldliness is to-day less conspicuous than in the past, it is in the proportion in which these traditional beliefs have lost their ancient impressiveness, i. e., in the proportion in which the Church has been humanized.

I may add that the atmosphere of doubt surrounding the Christian beliefs with which we are concerned, coexisting as it does with creeds that affirm their truth and with a worship that implies it, creates in the upper intellectual circles of the Churches and more particularly among professors and students of theology a situation threatening the most precious possession of teachers and students: their intellectual integrity.

Those who continue to think that humanity cannot proceed on its ascending march unless ultimate questions are answered in the formulæ given when the world was in its childhood, evince an unjustifiable lack of faith in man.

But, we are asked, How shall the untenable beliefs be replaced? The first question to be raised is rather, What is the practical necessity of replacing them? Our understanding of life has now proceeded far enough for us to know that the solution of ultimate problems is not practically urgent; this is

indeed a fortunate discovery. We should free ourselves from the conceited and false notion that the most important, or even *an* important requirement of existence is a philosophy setting forth solutions of the problems of origin and destiny. The unquenchable cravings for omniscience and moral perfection are crowning glories of man, and nothing is better worth cherishing; but the conviction that *we must know* whence we come and whither we are going, and that *we must possess* the assurance of a complete realization of our ideals on earth or elsewhere in order to lead a contented and worthy existence, is childish and mischievous. If I add that giving up the expectation of perfection will not materially alter the craving for it, I shall only be stating a fact made obvious by experience. It is in the very nature of desire to promote belief, but it is not in the nature of belief to produce desire.

On every hand, in individual as well as in national life, numberless facts proclaim that human nature is better adapted to the circumstances of existence than to require, under threat of dissolution, final purposes and the solution of ultimate problems. The revelations that come to man disclose ever proximate goals, and each new step means a new revelation. A purpose, in order to stir man to his depths, need not be infinitely great; he will risk his all, or he will live in a tremor of happy expectation for a trifle; he will walk as well and perhaps better when, instead of aiming to scale Mount Blanc, he ascends a hill; two hundred miles is as far to his eyes as two hundred thousand. To have observed that human society generates moral ideals together with impulses and

desires to realize them, is, whatever our theories about them, sufficient both for practical life and for the foundation of a science of ethics. To have gained that knowledge is to have secured ground unshakeable by any philosophy.

A science of ethics erected upon this foundation would not be a normative science; it would not spend itself in a search for the *summum bonum;* but, taking ideals as they are made by life, it would concern itself chiefly with the conditions favoring their appearance and their realization. Its aims would correspond to the aim of the physical sciences; it would seek control of the moral forces by means of a fuller and more exact knowledge of the conditions of their manifestations.

Do I mean that the discussion of the absolute good and all transcendental speculation should be given up? It would be both absurd and useless to ask those who recognize the presence in human society of spiritual forces, to refrain from seeking to know whence they proceed and whither they tend beyond the welfare of society. It is not against metaphysical speculation in general, or even principally against any particular solution of ultimate problems, even though not any one of them seem to me at all satisfactory, that I contend, but against the dangerous conviction that *some particular solution* — and, in the instance that has occupied us, a solution inherited from another age and demonstrably in disagreement with the best thinking of the times — is necessary to the well being of humanity. That is a false and a dangerous conviction. He has a sufficient living creed who can

affirm that moral forces actually come into existence in human society, and that its welfare and the individual's self-approval and self-respect are, as a matter of fact, indissolubly bound with the fulfillment of the moral demands.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

PERSONAL IMMORTALITY; A STATISTICAL INQUIRY

Mark with a cross in the column at the right *every statement* which is true *for you, regardless of any other fact.* The usefulness of this inquiry depends upon the exactness with which your present belief is represented. Do not think that you must now make up your mind correctly as to this belief; you are asked to state *your present belief or disbelief* with whatever vagueness belongs to it.

A. CONCERNING THE BELIEF IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

1. I *believe* in { personal I. for all men..... / conditional I., i.e. I. for those who have reached a certain state of development...
2. I believe neither in unconditional, nor in conditional I....
3. I have no definite belief.....
4. I *desire* personal I. and I think that there are facts and arguments which { compel assent to that belief / make that belief probable
5. I desire I. but I do not think that there are facts or arguments which { compel assent to that belief / make that belief probable
6. I do *not* desire I. but I think that there are facts and arguments which { compel assent to that belief / make that belief probable
7. I do not desire I. and I do not think that there are facts and arguments which { compel assent to that belief / make that belief probable

B. CONCERNING THE INFLUENCE OF THE BELIEF IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY UPON LIFE

I think that my life would be { seriously affected by the loss of the belief / to a certain extent affected by the loss of the belief ..... / not at all affected by the loss of the belief.

C. CONCERNING THE GROUNDS OF THE BELIEF IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

(Mark with two (2) crosses the arguments which have had most influence upon you. Do not mark any argument here listed which now seems to you valid, unless it has before this moment influenced your belief. Never mind contradictions.)

1. I have never assigned definite reasons to my belief.....
   I have never scrutinized the reasons and arguments which support my belief.....
   My belief is essentially traditional, non-critical.....
2. I think my belief is { established by the following facts and arguments..... / supported by the following facts and arguments.....

(a) Objective arguments or proofs.
   (1) Certain transformations of animal life (chrysalis passing into the butterfly) indicate that another life might follow the death of the human body .....
   (2) Researches of the kind pursued by the Society for Psychical Research { have proved I..... / have rendered I. probable.....

(b) Subjective arguments or proofs.
   (1) Cessation of personal existence seems to me impossible to admit.....
   (2) My sense of justice demands another world in which it may be gratified.....
   (3) The discontinuance, because of death, of love and friendship seems to me impossible to admit .....

(c) Metaphysical arguments or proofs.
   (1) The existence of a just and good God involves personal Immortality. He would not have placed in man yearnings for I. only to disappoint him .....
   (2) The continuation of the human individual is a corollary of the belief in the moral nature of the universe.....
   (3) The soul being a simple, indivisible substance, cannot be destroyed.....

D. INDICATE YOUR CLASS AND YOUR SEX BY UNDERLINING

Freshman Junior Sophomore Senior
Male Female

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